LEON BAPTISTA ALBERTI:

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CULTURAL CRITICISM

VOL. 1

by

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Diplom Architekt Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule-Zürich

SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE
IN PARTIAL FULFILLEMT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN THE FIELD OF
ARCHITECTURE, ART, AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

at the
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

June, 1986

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Submitted to the Department of Architecture
of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology
on February 3, 1986
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the Field of Architecture, Art, and
Environmental Studies.

- ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION -

This dissertation investigates Leon Baptista Alberti's cultural critique, taking into consideration a broad spectrum of Alberti's writings, including many which have remained relatively unknown and ignored. Alberti developed his cultural theories by means of a literary ontology which is based on the definition of the author, his role in society, and his function as catalyst for regeneration. His theory of art and of history, and even his views on the task of Humanism itself, are all subsumed in his comprehensive attempt to demonstrate that myth-making capabilities are central to society's self-definition. Unless society keeps alive the myths of destruction and regeneration, its historical viability, so Alberti argues, is endangered. Alberti's aesthetic theory, which has previously been sought exclusively in his treatises, De pictura and De re aedificatoria, emerges in this inquiry as inextricably interlocked with his cultural critique. For the first time, the treatises will be viewed from within the context of Alberti's own thought.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank all the members of my dissertation committee, Professors Stanford Anderson, Kurt Forster, David Friedman, and Marx Wartofsky. It has been a privilege to study under their guidance. David Friedman, who has read my drafts from their nascent and tenuous beginnings, is due special thanks for his patience. Stanford Anderson I thank for his guidance and consistent support. I am especially endebted to Kurt Forster, my thesis advisor, who with his "yeasty" intelligence gave me the courage to depart from the well-trodden path. I am also deeply indebted to Professor Henry Millon for the confidence he has placed in me ever since I first came to M.I.T.

The financial assistance I received, as a Chester Dale Fellow, from the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts at the National Gallery in Washington helped me to concentrate on my work full time and allowed me the peace of mind to complete it. It also defrayed the expenses of my research at the Vatican Archives and at the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana. I would also like to thank Dr. Maria Frank for reviewing and correcting the translations.

INTRODUCTION

The writings of Leon Baptista Alberti represent a complex textual landscape. Not only are there poems, dialogues, aphorisms, letters, allegories, fables, treatises, and games, but some of his works exist as fragments, some were meant to be incomplete, while others are complete, polished presentations. Furthermore, some are in Latin, some in volgare, and some in both. The complexity of Alberti's literary opus has led to a compartmentalization of his works, --a circumstance rarely sanctioned as good scholarly practice. The treatises De pictura, De re aedificatoria, and De statua have been claimed by art historians, Della famiglia by sociologists and cultural anthropologists, while the rest of his voluminous output, often called miscellanea, has largely been left in the hands of Italian literary specialists.

Of all of Alberti's writings, his treatises on painting and architecture have been accorded particular significance. They represent "the theoretical embodiment of the vital meaning of 'renaissance.'"[1] Since Alberti's other works were

never given similar scrutiny, there exists today an astonishing imbalance in Albertian research. In contrast to the numerous investigations into his aesthetics, studies of Alberti's so-called minor writings can almost be listed on one hand. Momus, De commodis litterarum atque incommodis, Intercoenales, Profugiorum ab aerumna and Trivia senatoria, which are not easily classifiable, and thus relegated to a minor status, have received scant attention. This disparity is reflected in the lack of translations of these so-called minor works. While his treatises have long been translated into many languages, only a few of the Latin works have been translated into Italian, and none, not even those written in Italian, have been translated into English.

Such a selective concentration on only one supposedly autonomous aspect of the thought of a figure as seminal as Alberti is indeed an amazing development. Even today art historians still painstakingly avoid any reference to Alberti's other writings. It might threaten the unity --or the one-sidedness, if one may be so bold-- of their interpretation. In such a recent investigation of Alberti's philosophy as Heiner Mühlmann's L. B. Alberti: Aesthetische Theorie der Renaissance (1982), the author barely mentions any Albertian writings apart from the two treatises on painting and architecture.[2]

The pro-art bias of past research is even reflected in the work of scholars who have made an effort to interpret

Alberti's so-called nonaesthetic writings (often referred to as "ethical" writings). David Marsh, for example, in his book The Quattrocento Dialogue (1980), in an otherwise penetrating analysis, is suprisingly beholden to the opinions of the art historian Giovanni Santinello, who does not hide his impatience with Alberti's "ethical" writings.[3] Bringing these anticipations to his study, Marsh finds Alberti's claim to novelty in De pictura convincing but ignores similar claims made by Alberti in regard to some of his other works. Marsh refers to them as "derivative."[4] Extrinsic latent presuppositions have always prejudiced research on Alberti's works and philosophy.

In the last decade, voices have been raised to warn of this excessive emphasis on Alberti's treatises. Eugenio Garin, the noted historian of Renaissance philosophy, was one of the first to call for a new assessment of Alberti's works. In his lecture "Il pensiero di L. B. Alberti nella cultura del Rinascimento" (1972),[5] Garin holds that the ambiguous language and shifting tactics of Alberti's expression do not follow a predictable course, but are full of "ferments, solicitations, strengths, rebellions and ... survivals, heritages and memories."[6] Attacking the stereotype of Alberti as the paradigm of harmony and moderation, Garin sees him as a "disquieting writer, unforeseeable and bizarre."[7] Far from viewing Alberti as a well-balanced "universal man," Garin sees him as having discovered the depths of modern "metaphysical anxiety."[8]

Although Garin attempts to redress the disparities existing in Alberti scholarship, he does not challenge the art historians' time-honored domain. In fact, he even reinforces the notion that there is an insurmountable dichotomy between Alberti's aesthetic writings and his other literary efforts. The former are characterized as "rational," the latter as "irrational" and more "modern" in mood.[9]

Lorenzo Begliomini, in his article "Note sull'opera dell'Alberti: il 'Momus' e il 'De re aedificatoria'"(1972), makes an even more extreme argument.[10] He claims that Alberti has "two faces." Some of his writings are civic (rational), like De re aedificatoria, whereas others were supposedly undertaken for pleasure or amusement (irrational), like Momus. This thesis of a "frattura consciente" seems to emerge presently as a new concensus.[11]

Alberti's ideas will not come fully into focus as long as these artificial divisions into technical and non-technical, aesthetic and ethical, rational and irrational, and serious and frivolous are imposed on his oeuvre. Such extrinsic divisions only serve to disorient or prejudice the enquiry. For example, the distinction between aesthetic and ethical is a purely modern, post-Kantian distinction unknown in the Renaissance.[12] Alberti's aesthetic treatises can easily be considered as ethical writings, and in his so-called ethical writings there are arguments significant to Alberti's understanding of art in society. If dualities exist

they must be defined according to intrinsic evidence and their dynamics must be illuminated.

As I will prove in my investigation, Alberti controlled all his output in a centralized fashion that cannot be reconstituted by studying only one or the other of his writings, or even one or the other of his so-called types of writing. For example, Della Famiglia is no more a complete representation of his thoughts on the family than De pictura is on the arts.

Alberti did not emphasize one work over the other, but allowed each work to assume a specific role within the larger framework of his cultural critique. The sum of Alberti's expositional scenarios gives way to an open-ended totality that does not allow simplistic divisions. His method can perhaps best be understood by comparing it to an arrangement of mathematical sets, which permit the author to combine the elements in the sets fluidly and rearrange the sets themselves so that they may partially overlap or be mutually exclusive.

In order to come closer to an intrinsic interpretation of Alberti's thought, we must first occupy ourselves with Alberti's theory of writing. It plays a crucial role in Alberti's ideas on culture, history, and art. Such an investigation has never been undertaken before, despite the fact that Alberti, already when he was twenty-five, openly proclaimed himself a writer in his treatise De commodis

litteratum atque incommodis (On the Advantages and Disadvantages of Writing).

> I have dedicated myself completely to the field of literature (litteris), leaving aside everything else. [13]

"Litteris" means of course "literature." However, for Alberti, his dedication to literature was not limited to reading or studying, not even to a passion for learning. Litteris culminates in the act of writing, and beyond that in fame. "I do not want to wind up old and unknown in the field of literature," Alberti adds.[14]

If Alberti viewed himself primarily as an author, it is imperative that one explore his thoughts on writing, his definition of the role of the author, the text and the public. His theory of writing is by no means hidden, but presented in works long ignored and undervalued. De commodis litteratum atque incommodis and Intercoenales (Table Talk), for example, are two works central to Alberti's world view, yet they rarely appear in discussions of his thought. To begin our discussion with Alberti's famous treatises would be to perpetuate past errors; these works, so I hold, are not so much the straightforward exposition of an aesthetic theory but are instrumental in the implementation of one. They are the necessary by-product of Alberti's literary and cultural theories.

There are many aspects of Alberti's literary theory which are, of course, typical of the early Renaissance

Humanists and which by no means can claim originality. For example, he shared with other Humanists the conviction that writing is not simply the exposition of thought, but that the text should be a challenge to action, a tool to activate man's reflexive propensity.[15] Alberti's request in Profugiorum ab aerumna, for example, that the reader "enter as if he were a fourth member of the discussion,"[16] is not a mere rhetorical topos, but a sign for the reader to take up the challenge of active participation.

However, Alberti went beyond many of the accepted notions. He recognized that the potential for action ideally implicit in the text constituted for the writer a considerable responsibility. It requires a definition and affirmation of the terms of textual production. The originality of Alberti's thought lies in the circumstance that he saw his theory of textual production as synonymous with the study of cultural identity, a type of study he holds to be sorely lacking in contemporary thought.

Not only did Alberti go beyond other Humanists in the theoretical importance he attributed to his literary theory, but he actually claims to have formulated his theory in opposition to contemporary Humanist practice. Therefore, it is particularly important to allow Alberti to speak for himself and investigate his thoughts on writing in his own terms, rather than lump him together with other Humanists, as can so easily be done.[17]

An investigation into Alberti's literary and cultural theories not yet having been undertaken, studies of Alberti's writings have all too frequently tended to fall back on generalized hermeneutical assumptions. A sublimated post-Enlightenment bias, for example, transforms Alberti into a precursor of empirical writing.[18] The first person singular of De pictura is invariably interpreted as designating Leon Baptista Alberti himself, an Alberti communicating his own experiences in a protomodern empirical manner.[19] In reality, we have here, as in all of Alberti's works, a form of authorial posing.

Though this study will refer to many of Alberti's writings, it does not claim to represent an analysis of all of Alberti's thought, nor does it give the final answer as to how his works should be interpreted. Formidable tasks which will fill the lives of generations of scholars are yet to be performed: textual interpretations, philological analysis, source investigations, contextual analysis and the like. The entire literary oeuvre of Alberti has to be subjected to a re-evaluation. It is not possible within the limits of this thesis to take on this gigantic enterprise. Selections had to be made. Nor will this paper examine the historical and cultural context in which Alberti wrote. We will study the cultural context viewed solely from within Alberti's own theory.

This paper does not over-emphasize the question of influence. Alberti's indebtedness to Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, Horace, Lucian, Quintilian, Augustine, Petrarch, Salutati and others is well-known and has been, and will continue to be, the subject of studies. Rather than search for influences, we shall ask what was Alberti's own theory of influence and how did he apply it in his writings.

The two parts of this dissertation correspond to the two levels on which Alberti's theory of writing operates. Part One investigates Alberti's definition of a literary ontology, that is, the ontology of "the author." He develops not one, but a whole range of authorial images, each one an experimental postulate in his cultural critique, and all with self-referential roots. Our exposition of Alberti's literary ontology will be divided as follows: in the first chapter, we shall study the overall picture of Alberti's "authors," from birth to death, so to speak; in the next, we shall focus on one particular figure and then on aspects of the "author's" fate in society.

In Part Two we shall study how Alberti enters into the definition of the "author" to fulfill and demonstrate the authorial task. In particular, we shall investigate Alberti's definition of the artist. The artist can only be studied from within the context of Alberti's literary ontology. We shall also explore Alberti's opposition to contemporary Humanism, which he felt had failed to establish a proper theoretical

foundation. We shall then investigate his theory of the function of a particular type of text. This type of text, according to Alberti, is a witness to the continuing vigor of society to project its myth-making capacity as an anchor into the future. Finally, we shall study Alberti's theory of how the text itself should be constructed and what challenges face the author in a fragmented literary world.

I

ALBERTI AND THE AUTOBIOGRAPHIC IMAGINATION

The writings of Leon Baptista Alberti should be viewed as a large stage set on which he develops his cultural critique by assigning his idea complexes to various personae dramatis. Each character represents a segment of Alberti's world view, and should never be studied in isolation. Self-referentiality serves a crucial unifying function in his exposition, in both a thematic and a structural sense, and has to be entered into and explored if one wishes to gain an understanding of his thoughts. It is our purpose here to discover where and how Alberti's self-referentiality is operative in his cultural critique, lift it out of the general tenor of the text, and subject it to investigation.

The wise man, Leon Baptista Alberti explains, sees his life as "un grande e celeberrimo teatro."[1] Thought and theater are overlapping domains. To understand Alberti, one must enter the scenarios of his expression.

The actors in Alberti's mental theater are characters invented on a scale unequalled in Renaissance literature. Already in the early Intercoenales (1430-1440) there are many that will prove important to our investigation: Leopis, the hopeful writer; Libripeta, the bookish cynic; Micrologus, the advocate of frugality; Philoponius, the disparaged youth;

Neofrono, the victimized author; Paleterus, the aged pragmatist; and Peniplusius, the poor-rich man.

These characters, which are only a few that we shall discuss, are all activated by means of an elaborate system of self-referential notations.

> I sprinkled everything with allusions to my studies and my age, and with other important fragments (reliqua) about myself. [2]

The allusions Alberti makes to himself and interlaces in all his writings are, however, clearly not of the empirical kind. Hard facts rarely appear in his writings. In De re aedificatoria, for example, Alberti makes not the slightest reference to his own considerable architectural achievements. In his so-called Vita anonyma, he claims to be in communication with nobles, popes, and kings, but never does he explain under what circumstances, or for what duration. One Albertian interlocutor refers to "continual peregrinations," but makes no reference to places and dates.

Thus though Alberti claims he is sprinkling his work with autobiographic allusions he does not so much supply the reader with concrete autobiographic data, but employs these allusions to mark and define his theory-laden characters. They project some aspect, factual or fictional, real or projected, of his own literary identity. They are never complete in and for themselves, but serve to contribute to the definition of an ontological structure which, though it is never revealed in its entirety, can be, and is meant to be,

reconstructed using the self-referential personae as the elements in the mosaic. The resultant configuration is essential to understanding Alberti's thought, for it links his literary, aesthetic and cultural theories.

In this chapter we shall attempt to delineate this ontological map, proceeding in a chronological fashion to show the maturing of Alberti's concepts. As will be shown later, Alberti gradually expanded his autobiographic characters into rhetorically enlarged visions and encompassing categories such as the prince, the architect, the painter, and the demigod. The most astonishing persona forwarded by Alberti in this vein is "Baptista," who, as we shall see, is also a category rather than a mere interlocutor as the name might imply. Though Baptista carries Alberti's own name, we must not assume that he talks unequivocally for the author. He is a highly original fictional device that invariably signals self-referentiality at its most complex and theoretical. We shall deal with him in a later chapter.

Already in Alberti's first known work, the play Philodoxeus, which was composed while the author was still in his twenties, some of the basic principles that were to occupy Alberti throughout the rest of his life make their appearance.[3] For example, in the play, Alberti presents himself in the role of the hero Philodoxus (Lit. Lover of Glory), a poor but noble university student, who attempts to woo Doxia. However, he is thwarted by the machinations of

Fortunius, who, aided by Dynastes (Power), attempts to abduct Doxia for himself. Philodoxus and Fortunius settle on an uncomfortable compromise in their struggle against each other. Through the clever intervention of Father Time, both emerge as victorious; Philodoxus marries Doxia, and Fortunius marries her sister Fame. However, the implication is that peace is only temporary, for the antagonists, through their marriages, have become stronger and thus the tensions have become more charged.

While the events of this play may appear trivial, they foreshadow the importance of the autobiographically-colored protagonist. Not only did Alberti introduce here for the first time an alter-ego, as it were, but he also presents it as representative of society's timeless struggle. Philodoxus, a symbol for the fate of society, experiences and articulates the stresses in society in his being, and thus personifies the struggle of society to gain control of its destiny. His success, however, is Pyrrhic, for as society's rejuvenative forces grow stronger, exemplified by Philodoxus' marriage to Fame, the destructive forces also gain commensurate momentum. This dichotomy was to become even more pronounced in Alberti's later writings.

To make sure that Philodoxus was understood as a transpersonal device identical with society's self-realization, Alberti catapulted his autobiographic hero onto the plane of myth by faking a classical text. He wrote Philodoxeus in an

antiquated style and successfully pawned it off as a Roman play, claiming to have discovered it in an ancient codex. In a Commentarium to the play, written in 1434, ten years after the play was published, Alberti describes and defends his actions.

> The work is marked by an eloquence that men learned in Latin literature praise to this day, and judge even now to be the product of some ancient author. As a result, no one can read the work without having the greatest admiration. Many commit it to memory, and not a few expend considerable effort in repeated copying.... When I realized that the work found such favor, and was sought everywhere by scholars because it was thought to be ancient, by a fabrication I persuaded those who sought the origin of the work that it had been excerpted from a very ancient codex. Everyone quickly agreed, for the work was redolent with a certain ancient, comic diction.... In addition, no one believed that in these times talents of this order were active. [Commentarium] [4]

No doubt Alberti was pulling the leg of those eager and rapacious scholars, whose fame rested solely on the discovery of ancient manuscripts and who were thus the gullible victims of this ploy. However, the piece is more than a mere stunt. Alberti presents the play as a piece of classical literature so that his life can be viewed as a "classical" theme incarnate and as the new locus for a supposedly time-honored criticism of society.

In Intercoenales (Table Talk), a collection of eleven books of dialogues, dreams and fables, Alberti orchestrates the themes of his cultural theory in a markedly more complex and sophisticated manner. Here again the mythologization of his own life is the method of exposition. The original

collection, written between 1430-1440, has come down to us divided into two groups, with a total of forty-three pieces. One series was dedicated to his friend, the famous mathematician and doctor Paolo Toscanelli, the other to various Humanists, notably Poggio Bracciolini. For the sake of clarity I will refer to the two groups, as Intercoenales I[5] and Intercoenales II.[6] These works have been heralded, at least by those few critics and historians who have studied them, as belonging to the most astounding documents of the fifteenth century.[7]

Intercoenales is quintessential to an understanding of Alberti's cultural theory, as many of the pieces are the foundation on which Alberti's literary ontology is built. They stand out for they are related across the boundaries of their fragmented formal settings by means of the characters they feature, characters that can be grouped into patterns. The most important character-grouping turns around the definition of a fictional author. It is this group, the most prominent in the Table Talks, that gives us the most penetrating insight into Alberti's theories. For purposes of identification, the "author," in the guise of his characters, will here be referred to as "Alberti." However we should not take "Alberti," as being identical to the author himself. He is an artificial construct, a purely theoretical, ontological proposition that moves under its own momentum and serves as one of the vehicles for the author's social and artistic critique. He receives his clearest definition in those

dialogues where he is confronted by the cynic Libripeta, another of Alberti's authorial modes.

In Scriptor, the first dialogue of Intercoenales I, Leopis (a derivative of Alberti's own name Leon) represents "Alberti." Leopis is described as a talented writer who has just emerged from a month of literary isolation. "[I am] striving to sow the seeds of my reputation as a writer...."[8] He encounters Libripeta, (Book Fanatic) who warns Leopis that "his literary efforts will be wasted, (operam perdis)."[9] Libripeta proceeds to point out to Leopis that as an author Leopis has placed himself in dangerous territory.

> LIBRIPETA: Ha, ha ha, ridiculous fellow! And you are trying to accomplish this on Tuscan soil? In a land wholly shrouded in a fog of utter ignorance? Where men's ambitions are entirely consumed by burning ambition and greed? [Scriptor] [10]

On one side, Leopis, so Libripeta continues, will be attacked by the representatives of the self-indulgent and evil mob which, if its dictates are ignored, will become vindictive. "The mob is a very stern critic"[11] Libripeta warns. The institution of academic learning takes up the attack on the other flank. Libripeta, "the darling of the learned," lets Leopis know that he himself will readily and forceably "tear him down in public; watch out especially for me."[12]

Though Leopis represents "Alberti," Libripeta, officially the antagonist, emerges as a mouthpiece of Alberti's own cynical world view. By implication the talented indi-

vidual, "Alberti," must sooner or later succumb to enemies among both the learned and the unlearned. Libripeta (Alberti as cynic) foreshadows what the young Leopis ("Alberti," the innocent author) has yet to learn.

In a dialogue called Somnium (Dream), one of the bleakest and most sinister pieces in Intercoenales II the role of "Alberti" is acted out by Lepidus.[13] Lepidus (Pleasant and Witty) catches Libripeta as he emerges from a sewer hole after having completed an incredible voyage through the Land Of Dreams. Libripeta, unshaken by his awkward position and foul stench, excitedly relates his adventures to Lepidus, who listens with astonishment.

Libripeta, expounding on his "wisdom learned from the sewer (cloacarium prudentiam),"[14] describes the grotesque landscape of the human psyche. In particular, he recalls a "Valley Of Forgotten Things." One finds everything there --"great bags full of free speech, lies, the sound of flutes and horns,... charitable acts, ... human authority."[15] Libripeta also sees there the lost literary works on the GOOD ARTS. But he does not find Stupidity. It, of course, is never forgotten.

After passing useless votive offerings ejected from a volcano to the greedy believers below, Libripeta comes upon a meadow of dreams more horrible than anything he had ever seen.

> LIBRIPETA: Instead of turf and blades of grass, men's hair and beards, women's flowing locks, the fur of animals, and even lion's manes grew there. In fact you could see nothing in this field except hair of all sorts, Great God! How many dreamers I saw there! All of them digging up some sort of roots which they ate, though they seemed neither wise nor well-informed to do so. Suddenly a great mass of lice flew up from the field and nearly ate me alive. My only salvation lay in finding an escape. And so, raving as I was from my experiences in such a place, I took to my heels and found my escape where it was offered. The fates provided this sewer to me. [Somnium] [16]

Lepidus is fascinated by Libripeta's story. Yet, he prefers, by definition, the placidity of his spirit. Though he listened attentively throughout, he remained unperturbed and before returning to his friends advised Libripeta to "take a bath."[17]

The ambivalence between innocence, represented by Leopis and Lepidus, and disillusionment, represented by the mature Libripeta, is followed up in yet another Intercoenales I dialogue, Religio, where Leopis and Libripeta encounter each other once again. Libripeta, who journies into the evil of man's psyche, not unexpectedly, tells Leopis, who has just returned from the temple, that he should not be so innocent as to believe what the priests have to say; the forces behind men's actions, priests included, are those of greed, avarice, and false hope. He cynically accuses Leopis of allowing himself to be seduced by the cunning of the priests, those "henchmen" of the "painted gods."[18] "You wear yourself out by nightly [literary] vigils" (a favorite autobiographic identi-

fication device), Libripeta sneers at Leopis, "but you still have much to learn about the evil and impiety of mankind."[19]

Libripeta, a type of devil's advocate, argues that piety is not only a manifestation of man's stupidity, but also of man's need to deceive in regard to his importance. Piety is a conceit, for in reality, so Libripeta argues, communication between men and gods is impossible. He advises Leopis to recognize the need to strip away the veneer of piety and admit that he has no choice but to rely on his own devices. To Libripeta, piety is a form of refuge that allows evil to hold sway.

> LIBRIPETA: Truly, the venerable gods are likely to overwhelm men with evil. And if some other power, such as Fate or Chance, or Time, causes distress, the gods themselves object. As for all your humble prayers, pious ones, they will be utterly disregarded. Besides, do you think that the gods are so similar to us mortals? Do you think that just like blind and careless men, they will suddenly form a plan of action and then just as suddenly change their firm intentions? Really, in the great scheme of things, as I am informed by the scholars on the subject, in the complex administration of the universe the gods govern by virtually immutable laws. Given that such is the case you madmen truly rave if you think that on the basis of your persuasive pleas the gods will change in thought or deeds... to do some new and extraordinary thing. [Religio] [20]

Libripeta does not claim man is independent. This is no joyful Humanistic voluntarism. He describes rather the deserted status of man who must admit his condition to himself. Since each man must look out for himself society is by necessity an organization of self-serving men. Since society balks at this insight, and insists on the smoke

screen of piety, it permits the religious establishment to step forward as the guardian of its self-deceit.

Libripeta's argument represents the firm conviction of the author, albeit in a cynical mode. In the beginning of the dialogue, Libripeta even has the upper hand, for he makes Leopis appear to be on the side of those who falsely and naively take refuge in religion. However, Leopis views his piety as not one of default but of conviction --a differentiation that Libripeta, does not acknowledge. Brushing aside Libripeta's arguments, Leopis states: "I remain unshaken."[21] "The prayers and pledges of good men," among whom Leopis counts himself, "are not unwelcome to the celestial beings."[22]

These three dialogues, Scriptor, Somnium, and Religio, were chosen because they help to map out two contrasting world views. On the one hand, there is "Alberti," under the guise of Leopis and Lepidus, who shuns entanglement with evil. On the other hand there is the powerful and damning skepticism of Libripeta, who wants to know what lurks behind the actions and rationalizations of mankind. Each serves to define the other. Much as in Philodoxeus, resolution is withheld.

Though he knows what lies behind the mask of social interaction, Libripeta offers no corrective or moral advice. That would be logically inconsistent with his nihilistic position which views the world as incorrigible. He has not

become evil himself, but takes pleasure in reporting it. As a result his psyche has become paralyzed into inactivity, for his negative knowledge has stymied his creative potential and his willingness to communicate on a beneficial level. Though he is himself a scholar, he selfishly keeps his books "under lock and key,[23] as Leopis points out in Somnium.

"Alberti" is in no position to counter the sophistication of Libripeta's nihilism. At best he can walk away. Thus the equation is not complete; there must be some mechanism by which the young, uncontaminated "Alberti" can successfully counter the diabolic skepticism of the aged cynic. Consequently, "Alberti" is developed not only in contrast with the aged cynic, but also with the aged wise man, who offers him an alternative. In the dialogue Paupertas,[24] between Peniplusius and Paleterus, Alberti suggests that a defense mechanism is indeed in place.

Peniplusius (From the Greek meaning Poor-Rich Man, i.e. poor in wealth, rich in virtue, talent, etc.) is now easily identifiable as "Alberti." He is self-confident, innocent, and "endowed with talent and much modesty,... noble, magnificent, well-bred and well-educated."[25] However, as Peniplusius receives financial support from his wealthier and older friend, Paleterus, he has unintentionally provoked envy and hatred among his fellow citizens.

Paleterus (Gr. Very Old and Experienced), as the name suggests, is wise to the ways of the world. He has learned to

live with evil without permitting it to affect him. Thus, his prudence is very different from Libripeta's cloacarium prudentiam. Benevolent and protective, Paleterus informs Peniplusius that noble thoughts and acts must be treated discreetly and properly safeguarded. Paleterus, "assuming responsibility for an area in which the cause of your [Peniplusius'] honor has been entrusted to me," points out that the masses eagerly await their opportunity to undo a talented person; yet there is much that can be done "to defend oneself against the mob."[26]

In this dialogue, just as in Scriptor, the innocent "Alberti" has to learn, against his naive instinct, of the evils and plottings of the vindictive mob and the scheming intellectuals. However, instead of being confronted with cynicism and disillusionment, he is guided towards a measure of hope. Instead of having his aspirations questioned, he learns the necessary survival skills which will enable him to protect his intellectual activities. Instead of resignation, he is taught pragmatism.

It is around these three mental constructs that Alberti plays out his life-long concerns on art and society: "Alberti" (the endangered author), Libripeta (the aged cynic), and Paleterus (the aloof sage who maneuvers pragmatically through the world). They are in essence the main actors in Alberti's cultural critique. The uncontaminated youth on center stage has to decide between the two paths

that present themselves, that of Libripeta or that of Paleterus. Both represent the alternatives of Alberti's existential dilemma.

Once we have understood the broader circumference of Alberti's deployment of self-referential figures, other Intercoenales dialogues and scenarios fall into place, such as Defunctus (Death), the last of the Intercoenales I pieces.[27] In Defunctus, "Alberti" takes on the role of Neofrono (Gr. Newfound Wisdom), who has just died and finds himself in Hades. When alive, Neofrono, who can be imagined as Leopis grown old, was, typically, "the wisest among men, and the most just and most happy... and universally acclaimed for his virtue."[28] He had dedicated himself to writing and had produced numerous "libelli commmentariorum." [29]

Implausible as it may seem, Neofrono, "distinguished representative of virtue," had remained innocent of evil through his entire life. Only in death is he allowed to learn about the "tyranny of evil."[30] He understands for the first time the insania which drives man and to which Libripeta had long pointed. From his new vantage point he witnesses with horror the infidelity and deceit of his own relatives and the destruction of his literary efforts. He exclaims in disgust that the world is a place to which "even if he could he would never return."[31] In death he is an exile, but ironically he acts as if this was a free choice, for he would "never return."

The construct "Alberti," whose implicit autobiographic definition begins as Leopis and ends as Neophrono, is that of a persona with little significant impact on society. Despite his virtues, literary efforts, and noble intentions he has not left society any better. "Alberti" is, however, only one variation of the authorial theme. In other dialogues and scenarios Alberti devises a more evolved "author" defined as conscious of the task that has to be confronted.

This more evolved "Alberti" differs from and supercedes his junior version. He is given two additional iconographic attributes. On one hand he can be recognized in the text by his outsider status, and on the other by his distinguished lineage. Again Alberti touches upon the circumstances of his own life, his exile, his illegitimacy, and his orphaned condition and transformed them into theoretical postulates. This is best portrayed in the figure of Philoponius (Lover of Hard Work), as described in Pupillus (Student).[32]

Philoponius is a writer and thus incorporates, for example, Leopis' literary ambition.

> He yearned to set himself above the rich and powerful simply on the basis of his literary accomplishments. [Pupillus] [33]

Philoponius is also a "talented adolescent,"[34] endangered by society. Yet unlike Leopis he is no longer invulnerable. "Yes, the fortune of this young man was indeed bad," the author notes; he lost his father, was abandoned by his family, and robbed by his relatives, became ill and poor; he

was even forced to beg ("esse mendicandum").[35] "He was outlawed in his native land," and had "no guardian to take care of him."[36]

Transforming autobiographic fact into myth, Alberti purposefully defines this more advanced version of "Alberti" as exiled and abandoned so that he could be allied with a truly noble lineage. Only with this added leverage can "Alberti" fulfill his mission as an effective instrument in the service of society.

> The papa of the little one born in his house said: He is my son. I reply, true. However, you have made him like all other animals born with two legs. I have made him like an earthly god of Virtue.... To whom would you say one who has been so ennobled is more indebted? To the papa (babbo), or to me, his true and best father (vero e ottimo padre)? [De Iciarchia] [37]

Aristotle had advocated just such heightening of the persona by stressing and even exaggerating one's good lineage. "We must prove," Aristotle argues, "that our hero's noble acts are intentional,"[38] and this can be done by pointing to his lineage and the excellence of his education. "Good fathers are likely to have good sons and good training is likely to produce good character."[39]

The two parents claimed for this advanced version of "Alberti" are Virtue and Apollo. These two gods transform him from a talented, albeit hapless victim, into a cunning strategist of cultural survival. They are responsible for him becoming a "mortal god." "Whenever a man thinks and acts with

ragione e virtù, he will be like a mortal god," (namely "Alberti").[40] However, the concepts reason and virtue must be understood from within Alberti's own mental theater. There are two dialogues, Oraculum and Virtus, in Intercoenales I which explain exactly the significance of each. We shall begin with Oraculum.

Oraculum[41] illuminates the lack of self-awareness of society. In this scenario various petitioners come before Apollo to ask for his guidance, and he attempts to enlighten them and orient them toward a productive life. Despite the blatant foolishness of their requests, Apollo's replies are always just and apt, if somewhat laconic as if in anticipation of resistance. The supplicants, who are led to understand the connection between their gift and their request, include, among others, a Scholar, a Disputant, a Benefactor, a Lover, and a Poorman. The first two are a Money Grubber and a Magnate.

MONEY GRUBBER: Apollo, I beg you, grant my request.
I bring this cart, laden with rustic
tools as a gift to you.
APOLLO: Keep these tools for now and use them. By
eventide you shall see yourself in them as
in a golden mirror.
MONEY GRUBBER: Hm, I always tried to avoid hard labor.
APOLLO: Well, that's the only way to avoid the
shame of poverty.
MAGNATE: I beg you Apollo, grant my request. I
bring you gems and gold coins. I fear envy.
APOLLO: Distribute your money among deserving
citizens.
MAGNATE: I don't know any.
APOLLO: Then make sure that you are never alone
with one person.
MAGNATE: That's impossible.
APOLLO: Make an effort to keep many similar to you

at your side.
MAGNATE: Too hard.
APOLLO: Well, that's the only way to stop fearing envy. [Oraculum] [42]

The story depicts an attempt on the part of the god to correct a major flaw in society: men are now blind to their own productive capabilities. Significantly, Apollo refuses all gifts offered to him by the supplicants who attempt to sway his judgment in their favor. Instead he advises them to put their gifts to constructive use. When Libripeta, for example, appears with his tomes, Apollo tells him to study them, but Libripeta refuses; "That would be all too tedious."[43] Once again it is shown how Libripeta's insight into man's evil has incapacitated him.

The systematic erosion of the very texture of society will progress unabated unless the principles that guarantee social continuity are made wholesome again. The implication, however, is that Apollo's advice will go unheeded. The bonds that once held society together, namely justice, rationality, and effort, have disintegrated, leaving instead corruption, greed, and distrust.

Unless corrections will be made, society will eventually be like the Poorman, the last of the supplicants. Apollo's wrath descends upon him with particular violence, for he offers nothing yet demands everything.[44] There is no leverage to work with. Unlike Peniplusius, the Poorman is poor in talent, imagination, and application; he is beyond

salvation, much as society would be without the remedial action of Apollo.

Yet Apollo's effectiveness is already in doubt. We see him replaced by a dubious Soothsayer, (Astrologus), who appears in a subsequent piece entitled Vaticinium (Prediction),[45] a somewhat obvious pun on the papal establishment. The soothsayer, who has set up his tent in the public square, is portrayed as a type of Apollo-gone-wrong. His mission is simply to pump money out of his customers who are eager to know the future. Whereas Apollo remains uncontaminated and returns all gifts, imploring mankind to make use of them, the Soothsayer greedily cashes in on the supplicants' foolishness. He plays mercilessly with their ambitions until the games eventually bore him and he retreats into his obscure mathematical calculations.[46]

The Money Grubber, who appears in both scenarios, is unable to differentiate between the true prophet and his substitute, a sign of social malfunctioning. In Oraculum, he maliciously and falsely accuses Apollo of being greedy, though in actuality the god never accepted his gifts! The Money Grubber's assertions to the contrary, Apollo's efforts are in fact "free of charge."

> MONEY GRUBBER: It is amazing how this marble Apollo, with his crowd of supplicants, has changed from his previous kindness and generosity. He used to give responses free of charge for rich and poor alike. Now he won't even speak unless paid in advance. [Oraculum] [47]

In contrast, the Money Grubber that appears in Vaticinium obeys every whim of the cunning soothsayer, who eventually entices him to give up his gold coins for nothing but empty promises. By implication, society, with its perverted demands, perverts its deity. Communication, in itself neutral, can become malignant if improperly employed.

Apollo, in some respects, represents the very ideal of Humanism. His wisdom is that of virtus, which, according to the conventional definition, is the ability to act correctly and morally.[48] Apollo also represents reason, and argues that his knowledge would be open to all if only the inherent logic of social interaction would be understood. By combining virtus and ratio, Alberti seems to be striving for a Humanist synthesis of virtus and doctrina, the combination of which was one of the essential features of early Humanist ethics. Salutati, for example, argued that philosophical speculation should strive for a convergence of the two elements.[49]

Apollo's knowledge, however, is not the bookish and scientific doctrina that Salutati had in mind, but is the knowledge that reason is a suppressant of man's evil. Unlike Libripeta who employs reason for the purpose of disillusionment, Apollo attempts to remind the supplicants of their true moral responsibility. He points to the potential virtus in each subcategory of social and spiritual existence, whether it be the Magistrate, the Money Grubber, the Scholar, the Disputant, or the Benefactor, to name only a few.

Furthermore, his judgments, as examples of "good" communication, are, one should not forget, free of charge, which is an essential feature of the uncontaminated spirit and, as we shall see, an important aspect of the writer's responsibility.

A piece unquestionably related to Oraculum is Virtus[50], a dialogue between Mercury and Virtue. The goddess Virtue, however, does not represent piety, or even appropriate moral action, as might be expected. That is the realm of Apollo. Instead she represents talent and creativity, not attributes common to all of mankind, but attributes of the uncommon man. Whereas Apollo must see to it that society continues to function despite its complexity, Virtue is the defender only of the rare and excellent men of genius. This double definition of Virtue, as virtue (moral action), and Virtue (talent), is central to Alberti's thought, and if unrecognized will lead to misprision.

Whereas Oraculum portrays social consciousness in a stage of imbalance, the theme of Virtus is far more eschatological. It predicts the immanent defeat of the creative individual in society. In the dialogue the goddess prepares to bring a complaint on Olympus against Fortuna. As she is alone in this endeavor, she desperately attempts to convince Mercury of her plight, begging for his support. Virtue describes to him the humiliation of being attacked by Fortuna's army. The threat, anticipated in Scriptor where

Leopis was threatened by the mob, had become in Virtus a reality as the mob, organized into an army by Fortuna, becomes all-powerful and rules the universe. Virtue had hoped that her protégés, Polyclitus, Archimedes, Cicero, Praxiteles, and others, would assist in her defense. However, their brushes, pens, and chisels proved of little use.

> VIRTUE: Plato, the philosopher, began to offer some arguments directed against her, about the duties of the gods. But she [Fortuna] was burning with rage. "Away with you, big mouth, she said, "for it is improper for slaves of the gods to take their masters into court!" Cicero also wanted to say something to sway her, but from the mass of armed men Mark Anthony burst forth, mightily displaying his fighting form, and thrust a threatening fist into Cicero's face. Thereupon, all my other allies decided to beat a hasty retreat. For Polyclitus with his brush, or Phidias with his chisel, or Archimedes with his sundial, or the rest of them having no weapons at all could hardly defend themselves against fierce armed men. [Virtus] 51

With her allies in retreat, Virtue was left alone to face the barbarous army that stripped her and dragged her through the mud. When she registers her complaint before the Olympian court, she discovers, just as Leopis did in Scriptor, that those with vested interests will not come to her aid. The gods, so we are told, are concerned only with "seeing to it that the butterflies keep their beautiful wings... and that the melons ripen."52

Since the mob listens only to Fortuna, and the gods are occupied with trifles, Virtue, who represents those men who laboriously develop their talent to the advantage of mankind, finds that she has no place in the present scheme of things.

Her message in defense of the talented will go unheeded. "I will forever more be stripped of honor, despised, and exiled."[53] Even Mercury makes little effort to come to her assistance and advises her to go into hiding.

In this dialogue, Alberti again attributes his works to an "ancient" author, in this case none other than Lepidus,[54] one of the "Alberti" personae. He, so it is implied now, takes up the battle on the side of Virtue instead of the defeatist Mercury. This identity with Virtue is required to save society under emergency conditions because the ranks of Virtue's defenders have grown too thin, as talented men no longer exist as profusely as they did in ancient times.

Ideally, the relationship between Virtue and society should be reciprocal. They depend on each other for their well-being. Society's more excellent men must keep the gods robust by fulfilling their function in society through dedication and hard work. In essence, we have here, much as in the Apollo dialogue, Alberti's contention that <u>adoparsi</u>, namely, application and diligence, is all-important. <u>Adoparsi</u>, however, is more than self-application. It involves the deliberate choice of good over evil.[55] Society, and its gods, which are dependent on these decisions, will be changed commensurately, for better or worse.

The figures of Apollo and Virtue are clearly complementary and interdependent. However, the balance of power between Apollo and the Soothsayer and between Virtue and

Fortuna is not in favor of the once beneficial gods, who have lost their effectiveness to communicate and to be heard. Their services are no longer demanded in a proper manner and in a proper context. While Virtue's protégés were still actively engaged in her favor, she could elicit "pious worship and due reverence."[56] But today, she is weak and "a commoner (plebe)."[57]

The link between Virtue's defeat and Apollo's ineffectiveness is more than implicit. The creative individual requires a stable society in order for his efforts to have their proper resonance. What is needed is a successful and operative union of Apollo and Virtue. Such a union would be a powerful constellation in the service of mankind. We can, therefore, anticipate that these two principles will always be allied in Alberti's more advanced autobiographic images and constitute the operative leverage which is directed towards the improvement of society.

Philoponius demonstrates particularly well Alberti's desire to resynthesize elements which had been singled out for definition in other dialogues. Philoponius' traumatic confrontation with the turbulence of society, as outlined earlier, is modeled on the theme from Virtus, which follows immediately after Pupillus. The argument of Pupillus that a society governed by evil and malice cannot comprehend the extraordinary nature of his being is also modeled on Virtus. Yet, despite the fact that Philoponius was ostracized and

homeless, he did survive thanks to the "pious" who recognized his true dignity, "his virtue and the noble efforts of his powerful will," the latter clearly an Apollonian attribute.[58]

In the definition of Philoponius, Alberti syncretically blends his own idiosyncratic versions of Virtue and Apollo with more standard literary themes, such as the orphaned son, the child prodigy, the righteous victim, the resolute hero, and the defenseless student.[59] The synthesis of all of these themes results in a powerful autobiographic statement. Whether Alberti himself is totally identical with this image or not is largely irrelevant since it is a textual construct, one of a growing number. Alberti obviously wants the reader to recognize that this is not a literal autobiography, but a textual device.

The above dialogues from Intercoenales are all short vignettes, purposefully incomplete, yet, all built around a few basic concepts. By means of reformulations, the reader is challenged to complete the ontological circle of which he is given only the fragments. From Scriptor, Paupertas, Virtus, Oraculum, and others, it becomes clear that the author is constructing his discourse around an image which we have called "Alberti," young, defenseless, untouched by evil. Yet to become operative in society, and not simply its victim he has to be endowed with Apollonian powers, a determined will, a nobility of soul and a generosity of spirit. He is defined as inheriting these attributes from his mythical parents.

Only equipped with such powerful attributes can he face his homelessness and exiled state, trapped as he is between the mob, ruled by Fortuna, the corrupt religious establishment, and the ossified academic tradition. All of these forces are concerned only with protecting their own interests at all costs and do not have the intrinsic well-being of "Alberti" (society) at heart.

We can now summarize. Each of the self-referential personae in Intercoenales, of which we have mentioned only a few, represents a particular aspect of Alberti's autobiographic spectrum. Alberti has divided the narrative enterprise into component parts, setting up scenarios in which the personae dramatis are kaleidoscopically reshuffled to render different aspects of the author's voice. There is the youthful entry into the world, the belated acceptance of "exile" in death, the conflicting visions of insania versus hope, and the emergence of a potentially powerful "author" who is not disillusioned or defeated by the cynic's knowledge, but transcends it. Alberti himself operates in the shadows, as it were, giving orientation to his images, much as a magnet orients splintered metal shavings.

It has frequently been pointed out that Alberti was inspired by such Roman satirists as Juvenal, Horace, and Lucian.[60] While this is no doubt the case, particularly in Intercoenales, these influences have been seamlessly adapted by and subsumed into the mechanics of his own operative

method. Alberti's particular originality, however, lies not only in the way he implements a quasi-autobiographical system, but in his understanding of the irony implicit in the ambiguity between absence and presence, between facts and fictions, building up an unresolved juxtaposition between himself, standing behind and beyond the text, and his incarnations in reverse, as it were, in his subcharacters.

Let us turn now to later works in which Alberti expands even further his quasi-autobiographic realm. To make the figure of "Alberti" more plausible as a chosen one qualified for his task as "author," Alberti in his later works reinforces the image of himself as belonging to a noble line of ancestors who support his endeavors and protect him. In both Profugiorum (1441) and Della Famiglia (1434) Alberti continues the theme of ancestral chosenness alluded to already in Oraculum and Virtus.

Profugiorum ab aerumna (Refuge from Mental Anguish), a lengthy treatise on the nature of suffering and melancholy, begins as three interlocutors, Niccolo, from the family of Veri de Medici, Agnolo of Filippi Pandolfini, playing the role of elder, and "Baptista" meet in a public temple in Florence.[61] Baptista is, of course, not Alberti himself, but another variation of the "Alberti" theme. His particular definition will be studied in a later chapter.

Baptista, though frequently addressed, remains reverently silent throughout the dialogue and serves only as a

commentator at the beginning of each of the three books.[62] Other than the unusual silence of the youthful Baptista --the silence of a modest learner-- the dialogue is programmatic in the Neo-Ciceronian style of the day and replete with the typical conventions such as the device of recantation and false argument.[63] The piece is even labeled a disputazione in accordance with Salutati's Neo-Ciceronian definition of a disputation as a conversation, rather than as a scholastic, philosophical presentation.[64]

As the dialogue develops, it is apparent that Alberti, even in a formal literary setting, allows his psyche increasingly to come to the fore. This is not only true of Niccolo, who plays a minor role, at least in terms of dialogue time, but especially for the illustrious and sagacious Agnolo, a man of outstanding virtue and integrity, who becomes the platform proper for the "author."

The shift from Agnolo to "Alberti" is particularly evident in the closing statement, where Agnolo announces that he will speak of his "own" experiences. "I don't want to be silent about what I feel within myself."[65] Agnolo-"Alberti" closes the treatise with a monologue of autobiographic suggestiveness about the struggles against "the misfortunes of his spirit," misfortunes that keep him awake at night with studies "into the nature of knowledge,... the causes of being and into things concealed and hidden in nature."[66] Agnolo-"Alberti" then extends the pattern of self-referentiality by

bringing the discussion back to Baptista as a model to be emulated. A circle of self-referential virtuosity is demonstrated here to perfection.

That Agnolo takes on a meta-identity is further stressed by a gradual transformation of the seeming age of the interlocutor. Though initially described as a ninety-year-old statesman, Agnolo at the end of Book III describes himself as enjoying sports, swimming, "spending the night playing with friends and youths," and even engaging in "lustful games."[67] He "becomes younger in a wonderful way."[68] Thus, Alberti brings Agnolo into a youthful frame of mind, which is essential to "Alberti's" ontological definition.

Agnolo serves a double purpose. On the one hand, he is the progenitor of that frame of mind that we have come to know as "Alberti." He is, as Niccolo points out, "like a father to Baptista,... who eagerly follows him around."[69] Not only is he a genetic construct, but he is also an epistemological guide and a writer hismelf. Like Paleterus, he holds forth on the nature of wisdom and the means to protect oneself against evil, external and internal. The circumstance that Agnolo is constructed to account for "Alberti's" origins, genetic and intellectual, and that he is old, yet "young in a wonderful way," is meant to suggest that the regenerative capacity of virtue is still a powerful force, and that Agnolo is both "Alberti's" father as well as "Alberti" himself, albeit in a nascent stage.

In Della famiglia (1434), by definition, the father figure plays the dominant role. However, in contrast to the brilliant ambiguities of Profugiorum, the relation between Alberti and his interlocutors is less complex here. Lacking the typical layering of complexities, it is Alberti's most straightforward work from a purely literary point of view. It may be the only dialogue on a large scale where literary signposts are properly employed, thanks to the insistence of the influential papal secretary Leonardo Dati, who had a say in the revision of the manuscript.[70] In the final version, the one known to us today, the interlocutors are all clearly outlined and maintain themselves within their preset boundaries throughout, although typically all of them express Albertian idea-complexes.

The aged Giannozzo (Alberti's uncle) wins the day. He is portrayed as a person whose wisdom, knowledge, and experience have to be absorbed. Because of the more programmatic nature of Della famiglia, Alberti cannot slip into the guise of Giannozzo with as much ease as he did with the character Agnolo. Nevertheless, these two personae belong to the same category of individuals. Alberti himself links the two together in Profugiorum: "Agnolo and Giannozzo are the only two men he [Baptista] knows who are complete in all the values of life."[71] However, virtue is allowed many variations, according to the talents of the individual possessing it, Alberti argues.[72] Giannozzo is craftier than Agnolo, but

Agnolo is accredited with "a greater knowledge of literature."[73]

Giannozzo and Agnolo are, however, only two of the several padri who went into the make-up of the character "Alberti," the young and new representative of the same tradition of virtue. We should not forget the aged and wise Paleterus, "that old family friend whom I consider as a father."[74] And there is also Alberti's "Grandfather," Benedetto Alberti, as described in Divitae (Wealth) in Intercoenales I. "He was famous for his noble character and virtue."[75]

"Alberti" willingly and eagerly assumes his duty as a successor to the cultural heritage represented by his father figures. Inheritance derives its power from the circumstance that it is a natural event, as Giannozzo himself explains. He draws an analogy between the father of the family and the activity of the bees.

> GIANOZZO: They [the bees] work with manly vigor and passionate zeal, some reaping precious pollen from the flowers, others bearing the burden home, some distribute it among the workers, others build the house. [Della Famiglia] [76]

To counteract society's unnatural self-destructive urge, the ritual of transference has to be made conscious so as to enliven society's decaying sense of self-preservation. The persona dramatis of Alberti's cultural theory is this youth who is unconcerned with his own self-preservation. In Philodoxus, the hero derives his legitimacy from his

"father", in this case Father Time, Chronos, who saves him from the machinations of Fortunius and Dynastes. Similarly, the young Philoponius in Pupillus is described as having been saved by Ersatz parents who alone understand his plight. And in a dialogue Aerumna (Mental Anguish), from a later Intercoenales II, we encounter Peniplusius once again, protected by an unnamed "father" against the cynicism of an unnamed philosopher (Libripeta?).[77]

As always, for Alberti, fatherhood combines the ontological and epistemological. Thus, there is a fusion between father and son, and between society and student. This is why we find "Alberti" in the role of student in Profugiorum, for example, when obviously he was no longer a young student. In reverse, in his treatise on oratory, Trivia senatoria (1460), Alberti admonishes Lorenzo de' Medici Giovanetto (b. 1449), to whom the work is dedicated, to view his teachers Landino and Gentile as his fathers.

> Imitate these men, remarkable and illustrious, as your father, known for their virtues and knowledge of writing, so that the fatherland can be more glorious to have possessed in one single important family such a citizen as you, stamped by virtue and literary merit. [Trivia] [78]

"Alberti," the student and the son, emerges as the chosen one in the vanguard of the regenerative effort. His task is to strike out in advance of the others to prepare the way for those who follow. His progenitors transform him from a mendicant into a true path finder.

> If someone appropriate could be found to be sent ahead of the party to study the route in advance of the others, to seek out and engage provisions and provide meals for those who are to follow... such would be wisdom. And indeed I think this ought to be the plan we follow in life. [Parsimonia] [79]

The myth of rejuvenation, centered on "Alberti" figures like Philoponius, and the myth of perpetual cultural disintegration, portrayed in the figure of Libripeta, together represent the drama of the present. As shown in the confrontation between Philodoxius and Fortunius, and Leopis and Libripeta, there is never a victory of one over the other. Neither a utopian nor an eschatological vision is permitted to break the deadlock. At best we have a precarious continuity. In Della Famiglia and Profugiorum, the process of transmission is described as functioning, albeit in a small way. In these writings, the mechanism that guarantees cultural continuity is rendered as being intact but fragile.

In 1440, after having just finished Della Famiglia, Alberti took the next step consistent with his autobiographic journey. In Theogenius, the exclusive community of virtuous elders is made to die away, leaving "Alberti" to struggle for himself. Theogenius (from the Greek: The Origin of the Gods) was written "in the memory of my deceased parents."[80]

In the letter of dedication, addressed to Leonello d'Este, Alberti claims that he wrote this piece as a private meditation on his personal loss. "I want only to console

myself in my adverse fortunes."[81] However, the theme of loss and misfortune is a posture. In reality, Alberti's claims to privacy are only a pretense, for in the very next sentence he admits that he desires nothing less than to address a broad audience. He hopes that his style will not prove to be too difficult. "I write in such a manner that I could be understood even by those fellow citizens who are not well cultured."[82]

Though it is possible that Alberti may suddenly have decided to dedicate a piece in memory of his real parents, the tenor of the book, in accordance with Alberti's myth-making propensity, invites a metaphorical interpretation. After all, Alberti's father had died twenty years earlier and his mother several years before that. Furthermore, Theogenius is an elaboration of a theme latent in the early Intercoenales I dialogue Defunctus. However, whereas in Defunctus, Neophrono ("Alberti") dies so that the naive author could finally observe the functioning of evil, in the mature Theogenius it is the "family" that is made to die.

The father image in Theogenius is assigned to Genipatro, (Father of Talent). He is described as aged, wise, and "an exceptionally prudent man."[83]

> THEOGENIUS: Genipatro is a man who, because of his well-spent age, of his experience of many things, various and useful for living, and of his knowledge of letters and excellent arts, is very provident and wise. ... His books, well composed and very correct, which are full of teachings and wonderful kindness, are welcome by good people and scholars

alike and will make him, as we hope, immortal. [Theogenius] [84]

Genipatro, whose "father is his sincere reason" and his "mother his upright virtue,"[85] is the antithesis of Libripeta, for unlike Libripeta he has not lost faith in the future. Whereas Libripeta keeps his books, "under lock and key,"[86] and refuses to write,[87] Genipatro communicates openly and freely with all who wish to follow his guidance.

It is from Genipatro, whose wisdom, significantly enough is "similar to the oracle of Apollo," that Theogenius ("Alberti") presumably inherited his own Apollonian abilities to see into the hearts of men and predict their future.[88] However, Genipatro is gone and Theogenius, his student and author himself, is now alone to confront the terrors of the world, and face the "bestial humans," who "infest" everything they touch, bringing destruction in their wake.[89]

Although Libripeta had long heralded the presence of evil and the numbing influence it exerts on creativity, "Alberti," shielded first by his innocence and then by his parents, never had to confront evil himself. Now, however, his aura of invulnerability has been removed and his eyes are opened. Theogenius discovers a horrifying and disgusting world. He finds that everything man touches is "devoured in the dark abyss of his stomach."[90] Everything sways in the tyranny of varietà e varietà.[91] Nothing is constant and nothing can be trusted.

By implication life now has to be confronted without the support of the father figures; the conflict between disillusionment and hope becomes more anxious and immediate. The total responsibility for cultural continuity rests now on the shoulders of the surviving son who has come into his own. Two works in particular, Momus and De Iciarchia, explore this new situation.

In Momus (1443-45), Alberti takes up the first of the two themes.[92] Alberti composes an image of himself, Momo (God of Ridicule or Irony) with a scenario of loneliness, suffering, isolation, mistreatment, and rejection. This situation is supposed to draw us into full awareness of the vulnerability and defenselessness of the last free and virtuous man tossed about on the tumultuous waves of social discord. Though Momo is "the profoundest among the gods,"[93] he is rejected by man and god alike not only despite but actually on account of his excellent characteristics.

Momo, however, is not blessed with an amiable charcter. On the contrary, he is an irascible cynic, not unlike Libripeta. When Jove asked each god for a gift to embellish his creation, earth, all the gods attempted to make something Jove might praise, but not Momo. His gifts were the cockroach and the moth.[94]

Joves' rationally-constructed universe quickly deteriorates. Seeing this he ordains the destruction of the world so that a new one can be constructed. But Jove, now weak in

spirit, falters at the task. The gods convene to help him but soon fight among themselves; Olympus, which Alberti notes is a metaphor for our earthly existence, degenerates into a "crude and drunken brothel."[95]

> As the gods took sides, the passions degenerated into hostility and tumult, until finally there were at least three camps. On one side was Jove, outside of himself with a great desire to construct, collect, with good and bad means, a group of adherents, as many as possible, and organize them for the salvation of mankind. Opposed to him, there was assembled a throng of common [gods] prejudiced to their own interests, but who attempted to mask that immoderate love of novelty that inflamed them, with their zeal to demonstrate their obsequiousness toward the king of the gods. In the middle there was a third group formed by those who believed heavily and dangerously that they could put themselves in charge of the ignoble and inconstant masses. [Momus] [96]

Momo alone rises to the occasion and plays a central part in the planned construction of a new world. He presents to Jove a manuscript, a (tabella), which is in essence a blueprint for action. We recognize here that the youthfully envisioned Leopis from Scriptor has been metamorphosed into the god Momo. Momo gives the manuscript to Jove in a desperate attempt to remind him of the principles of justice that he had forgotten. Momo's efforts, however, prove futile. Libripeta's prophecy from Scriptor, "operam perdis," comes to haunt Momo.

> There where I should have been given gratitude, I was given lots of envy, there where I had hoped to aid the living, I found injury; there where good men made many promises, the wicked gave me the same amount of wickedness. Such systems are common among men. [Momus] [97]

In the tumultuous days prior to the end of the world, Momo discovers that because of the total corruption of both the human and divine orders, he can declare himself a vagabond. Under the circumstances of crisis which is now overt he confesses his true nature as outsider. Whereas the youthful Philoponius was forced to become a mendicant, Momo is one by innate definition. For him it is an intellectual stance. As a vagabondo he is the final victim of the evils of society. He is left to wander about and exhaust himself. Disillusioned, exiled, and even castrated, "he no longer preoccupies himself with the future."[98] Representing an advanced version of Libripeta he rejects all obligation to society.

Another character, Gelasto (Gr. The Ridiculous One), a philosopher, is introduced to reinforce the theme of a tragic autobiographic image. Though Gelasto is a pretentious philosopher, Alberti bestows even on him attributes from his autobiographic arsenal. Gelasto, like Momo bears some of the unmistakable characteristics of the learned cynic, Libripeta. He too denies social responsibility and expresses distrust in everything human. In Gelasto's lament, we even recognize the tale of Virtue's defeat at the hands of Fortuna, a tale which Alberti thought out some twenty-five years earlier and in which he predicted, and now fulfills, the trajectory of his "autobiography."

> Exiled from my country, I consumed the fire of youth in a continuous peregrination and in constant fatigue, pestered without respite by poverty and injuries from enemies. I have endured the evil deeds of friends and the pillage on the part of my

> relatives, the slander of rivals, and the cruelty of enemies. In escaping the hostile attacks of Fortuna, I fell into the abyss that was prepared for me. Though I was agitated by the convulsions of the times, burdened by preoccupations, oppressed by necessity, I endured everything with moderation, hoping always to receive better treatment from the gods. Happy was I if I could manage to draw some satisfaction from the exercise of the arts, to which I am always dedicated. Whether or not my writings drew me any profit, that I will let others judge. [Momus] [99]

Ironically, Peniplusius makes a reappearance in Momus just before the end of the work.[100] Unlike Momo, the youthful Peniplusius has learned the lessons of survival well. Peniplusius, now deceased and trying to find an empty seat on Charon's boat for the trip across the river Styx, has lead a remarkably full life. His talents and capabilities have actually served him well. His virtue was recognized, his true leadership acclaimed, and his efforts to protect the city acknowledged by all, all that is except the false ruler, the tyrant Megalophos (From the Greek: Grand and Plumed). Peniplusius, the spirit of good social conscience, did everything silently, without fanfare, and with modesty and strength.

Thus, we have from among the numerous authorial variations two autobiographic tracks. On one hand the scenario that began with Leopis and the prediction of doom by Libripeta is played out to its logical end in the figure of Momo, who is both a transmittor of a text and yet a cynic. On the other hand Peniplusius, saved, as we may recall, by the old and wise Paleterus, has lived to be honored by Caronte. Counselled in the pragmatic wisdom of his fatherly image,

Peniplusius has managed to continue the tradition of virtue, whereas the efforts of Momus have misfired.

If, in Momus, the outlook for society is described as hopeless, De Iciarchia, written in 1470, three years before Alberti's death, takes the more optimistic Philoponius theme to its own theoretical limits. Icarcio means, as Alberti explains, "the man of excellence and ruler of his family."[101] In this last tour de force of his autobiographical journey, "Alberti" has now himself become a father image (although the author was never married), speaking in front of the fireplace to two young nephews. Icarcio, like Philoponius, is noble in demeanor, and "his goods, his toil and his very life," are placed in the service of society, all in the required understated and self-understood way.[102] Unlike the brash Momo who nihilistically tells us to take any route we wish since all is an exercise in futility, the author here points to Icarcio as a path finder. "He is a guide of others (primario e massimo moderator degli altri)."[103]

In surveying Alberti's works, as we have done, for their autobiographic constructs, it becomes clear that Alberti was using a deliberate strategy and was not merely wallowing in self-pity on the one hand or in hybris on the other. He quarried events and circumstances of his personal existence for his theoretical purposes. In time, the autobiographical notations became increasingly autonomous, for by the 1440s, when Alberti wrote Momus, his life had taken a

course far different from the trajectory anticipated by his early literary works.

As Alberti became freed from his painful start in lived experience, he directed his autobiographic method more and more toward social criticism. The exile from Florence, though terminated when Alberti was twenty-four, was transformed into a metaphorical exile of the spirit in later works. The orphaned and mendicant Philoponius became both the sophisticated vagabond of Momus and then the wise guide of De Iciarchia. The early loss of his father became the loss of society's necessary center of gravity. The "poor-but-rich" Peniplusius grew up to be the stabilizing force of society. The anxious struggles for acceptance were metamorphosed into visions of eschatological hopelessness. The youthful peregrinations of the student became the dream journeys of the learned scholar Libripeta. And the innocent writer Leopis, bursting radiantly onto the literary scene, became the courageous Momus who dared, as if in a reverse Moses myth, to offer a tabella to inform the gods on how to conduct their affairs.

The cultural crisis Alberti envisions is not an active, but a chronic condition of an unstable present poised precariously between past and future. Though De Iciarchia seems to end Alberti's life with his thought pointing in the direction of hope, the ambivalence between disillusionment and hope is never resolved. This is not a sign of incon-

clusiveness, but of the dialectic that entraps the purposefully defined innocence of the author. He becomes either a victim of the forces of cultural self-destruction or the catalyst of cultural preservation, and actually both at the same time.

Let us now pause and ask how an investigation into Alberti's self-referentiality will affect a study of his aesthetics. By now it should be clear that Alberti's approach to writing can hardly be ascertained simply by reading his writings at face value. Yet, scholars have always read Alberti's aesthetic treatises as if they were devoid of literary strategy whatsoever. It has generally been assumed that De pictura and De re aedificatoria are "technical treatises," objective and empirical, and thus stand apart from Alberti's other writings, regardless of what conclusions can be drawn from them. Cecil Grayson holds, for example, that De pictura is "clear enough."[104] Even Eugin Garin, who so astutely brings to the fore the pessimistic world view of Alberti, accepts the conventional stereotype that his aesthetics are "rational."[105]

Of course, by their very nature Alberti's treatises on painting and architecture are more technical and more

rationally constructed than are some of his other writings. Yet, this should not lead us to the conclusion that they can be studied in isolation from Alberti's other writings. The self-referential impetus that started Alberti on a trajectory of literary theory is by no means abandoned in these works. Instead it has been transformed and heightened to a realm larger than life, where the combined horizons of exalted "personae" give the due setting to the epic struggle for cultural survival. As we shall see in the course of this investigation, not only is Alberti's self-referentiality particularly operative in his aesthetic theory, but without an understanding of his literary ontology, his position on art and society would be totally misconstrued. Once we are aware of this, we may wonder how we could have been so innocent.

II

BAPTISTA AND AESTHETIC SIMULATION

Whereas some of Alberti's interlocutors are casual inventions, there is nothing casual about Baptista. Great thought has gone into priming this figure for his task. Alberti began to form Baptista early in his writing career and turned him into one of the main vehicles of his thoughts on aesthetics and social hygiene. He would, in later phases in Alberti's thought, become a model for other transcendent images, such as the Prince, the Architect and Momus, to name the most salient, all of which arise out of the author's self-promotive and self-referential investigatory style. These rhetorically enlarged versions of self are more properly designated as inhabited categories than as interlocutors. But let us first discuss the figure of Baptista and reserve a discussion of the others for a later chapter.

In 1433 Alberti employed his own name "Baptista" for the first time in his writings. Considering the large number of autobiographic personalities and their complex relationship to one another we can anticipate that Baptista is no casually conceived interlocutor. As we shall see, it is important to understand the function of Baptista before we can even begin to understand Alberti's aesthetic theory, particularly as expounded in De pictura. This treatise was written only two years after Baptista's initial appearance in Alberti's writings.

Baptista appears in four of Alberti's works: Della Famiglia (1433-34), Vita anonyma (1438), Profugiorum (1441), and De Iciarchia (1468). He is not presented, however, with the same degree of prominence. In Della Famiglia, and De Iciarchia, Baptista takes an active part in the debates. In Profugiorum, in contrast, he is present but remains silent. Nevertheless, in all the works, he is rendered as an eternally young and vigorous persona. Interlocutors frequently bestow praise upon him, and treat him as a person of importance and incipient fame. Even Baptista's daily routines reflect the practices of a man who is taken seriously.

> Baptista, as was his custom,... would walk a few hours in the hills, or in the plain, for exercise, and then return to his study of literature and philosophy. [Profugiorum] [1]

The Vita anonyma, as the text has been labeled by historians, is all-important to understand the definition of Baptista.[2] The piece is not a real autobiography as it is often claimed in the literature, but a piece of creative writing, a blend of fact and fiction, not unlike Pupillus, in which Philoponius is described. The Vita is, however, far more powerful. Here we find a youthful, legendary Baptista, stoically shouldering the misfortunes of life, overcoming loneliness, illness, and poverty. The stigma of exile and even the mistreatment of his relatives, which had so oppressed Philoponius, do not, however, dispirit him.

As we can anticipate, Alberti endows Baptista with Apollonian attributes, particularly the ability to penetrate the soul of men and predict their future.

> At just a glance he could determine everyone's defects. ... Standing in front of the palace of d'Este, where in the time of Niccolo the Tyrant, most of the city's youth would be slain, he said: "Oh friends, this pavement will perforce be slippery in the future because much blood will flow within this wall."... He also predicted the destiny of the pope. [Vita][3]

Baptista was of course the paragon of virtue.

> Among Italian princes and foreign kings there was more than one who was a witness and expositor of his virtue. [Vita][4]

Hyperbole even extended to his athletic superiority. Here too Baptista excelled over average mortals.

> He could jump from the ground over a standing man. [Vita] [5]

> In soldierly exercises, he was famous in his youth.... He could throw a small coin of silver up high in a temple with so much force that one could hear the sound of it hitting the vault. [Vita] [6]

Baptista was also endowed with a certain "saintly" characteristic. In 1433, in the very year that Baptista appears in Della Famiglia, Alberti also wrote Vita St. Potiti, which was his first exercise in writing historical biography.[7] Though the assignment to create the hagiography of this young early Christian saint had been forced upon Alberti when he entered the curia in 1432, the life of the saint is largely Alberti's own invention.[8] Basing himself on a few sketchy and dubious rough legends that were given to

him as a starting point, Alberti changed the uncouth and impetuous young saint into a gentle and articulate martyr[9] --an identity that reinforced his own, idealized personality. Alberti composed the following epitaph for St. Potiti who had suffered a martyr's death when he was only fourteen.

> Here lies Potiti of Sernica, who endured hunger and thirst, exile, solitude, and finally poverty, who disregarded glory as well as torments, and who sought death itself for the sake of Christianity. All these things he accomplished by the age of fourteen. [Vita S. Potiti] [10]

In the figure of Baptista, Alberti allows the saint, under the proper symbols of transformation, to rise again from the ashes. In fact, Alberti begins his description of the life of St. Potiti with the following remarkable words, which perhaps more than allude to the fact that St. Potiti had been revamped to suit Alberti's own purpose.

> I wanted the early life of Potiti to be the first subject on which I could test my abilities. His youth was marked by a singular perseverance and by a multitude of miracles. Whoever makes the effort to study this youth will find much material for discussion and much application to his own life. [Vita S. Potiti] [11]

Certain aspects of the young martyr that Alberti emphasizes --his youthfulness, forbearance, virtuousness, and transcendence over poverty and other torments-- became the commonplaces of Baptista's own existence. Alberti's Baptista also shares with St. Potiti a certain Early Christian meekness; he is triumphantly defenseless.

> He [Baptista] carried himself with modesty and great equanimity among the envious and maligning people so that the bad mouthers and rivals, as much

> as they hated him, were forced to admire him.... [Vita] [12]

We continue to hear echoes of this theme even late in Alberti's life. In De Iciarchia, Alberti's last writing, Baptista still praises "the good, virtuous, and meek against the vicious, rapacious, and ambitious."[13]

Once again the theme of defenselessness and death blend into each other. St. Potiti was banished to Yugoslavia, but he decided to return to his homeland with full knowledge that death would be the consequence. Just as St. Potiti meets an untimely death, so too do we find Baptista, "that most innocent one," betrayed by a servant who intends to have him murdered.

> There was one, a relative, not speaking of the many others, who, though he had experienced the benefits and liberalism of his humanity, was most untrustworthy, impious, and most evil, and who with a wicked oath conspired audaciously to incite the servants to attack that most innocent person with a barbarous knife. [Vita][14]

Baptista's impeccable moral stature is proven by his refusal to defend himself. He has no need of defense, Virtue protects him.

Of all of Baptista's characteristics, the most important is his astonishing and practically boundless talent. Philoponius already prefigures this combination of creativity and defenseless virtue.[15] Philoponius, however, was brash and vindictive; he cried out to the gods to revenge the injustice of his lack of recognition.

> Thus driven by so many misfortunes and overwhelmed in his raging mind by anger and indignation, the youth [Philopounius] lashed out in these words. "Why should I expect the gods to be kind to me in the future since I know that I am specifically marked out from birth for perpetual misery? [Pupillus] [16]

This is a sentiment that Baptista, modeled on the more courageous figure of St. Potiti, never permits himself. Hatred is replaced by self-effacing patience, thereby allowing his creativity to rise untainted to the surface.

> He wanted in all things a sense of moderation, all that is except for patience; in this regard he said: "One should possess either all of it or none of it." [Vita] [17]

For Alberti, virtue and genius are not universal qualities. Only those unique individuals, who diligently and consistently model themselves after the goddess Virtue, the strong willed, defenseless, protectress of the arts, can find the fulfillment of their genius. Baptista does not represent mankind at large, but is the spokesman for the self-conscious and precocious men of genius who are aware of their extraordinary powers.

> He was sure of himself as a leading youth of his age. [Vita] [18]

He was also sure of himself as an author.

> He was pleased with his writings, for he, like other writers, had done as well as he could with the strength of his talent, which was not small. [Vita] [19]

While Leopis and Philoponius share certain attributes with Baptista, notably that of being writers, Baptista is defined as being an artist in a larger sense. Constantly

exuding creative energy, he presents himself, in particular, as the defender of Virtue and thus as the defender of the artistically productive. "Since he was so very talented (ingenio fuit versatili)," Alberti writes in his Vita anonyma, "it is said that all the arts were his."[20] He "taught himself how to play the organ ... and his advice helped others to become proficient in music."[21] Furthermore, "Baptista," so Agnolo of the Profugiorum insists, "could paint and model in wax,... he took delight in it and wrote about it."[22] He also tells us that on behalf of the painters, Baptista succeeded in astutely "drawing out from the mathematicians the rudiments of painting."[23]

Even though the concept of Baptista is highly inventive, there can be no doubt but that in the early Quattrocento there existed a great fascination with child prodigies. In fact we have a contemporary description of just such a prodigy which shows amazing parallels with Alberti's definition of Baptista. In 1445, it is known that a boy wonder, a certain twenty-year-old Fernando of Cordova, was in Navarre impressing the Scholastics at the university there with his learning.[24] He traveled throughout Italy, performing at numerous universities, and even appeared in Rome before 1445. Whether Alberti met him or not cannot be ascertained. What is interesting, however, is that the contemporary description of him lists those very attributes that Alberti claims for Baptista. He was skilled in music, mathematics, fighting, horsemanship, debating, and even in painting. As

Alberti's Baptista was already created by 1438, it is unlikely that Fernando was Alberti's model, more likely, a common prototype of child prodigy existed in some literary piece.

Baptista, however, should not be viewed as mere braggadocio, displaying Alberti himself as a prodigy, nor is he simply a collection of early Renaissance commonplaces. Rather, he is a deliberately created mental interior, an ontological projection, so to speak, which provides the necessary conditions under which ethical and aesthetic endeavors can be fused into a powerful alliance. Alberti created Baptista very much as an artist creates an art object. We should not ignore the fact that the invention of Baptista and the writing of De pictura took place within the same few years. Thus, in order to understand Baptista more fully, it is appropriate to turn an eye toward Alberti's definition of beauty.

Alberti's concept of beauty is made difficult by his adamant rejection of metaphysical terminology. Alberti did not want to be narrowly identified with a philosophical system, holding as he did that such systems are not related to the "realities of human existence."[25] In Momus, written at the same time as De re aedificatoria, Alberti rejects as "confused and bombastic" such philosophical notions as "mental forms" and "substances."[26] He mercilessly caricatures the philosophers who are unable to describe what they see

except through meaningless abstractions. Alberti recognized, however, that his interest in aesthetics frequently brought him all too close to those very concepts he so disdained and he often had to back away. As he himself states, the question of beauty is "an inquiry of the utmost difficulty."[27]

Despite the purposeful lack of terminological rigor in Alberti's treatises, Alberti defines artistic beauty as a process involving essentially two different stages. The first has its impetus in nature. The second is the subsequent and necessary transformation. For example, a painting begins by following the rules of nature, among which are the mathematical rules of perspective. Such mathematical premises, so Alberti stresses in De pictura, are a type of mental imitation of nature. "A spherical surface is like (imitatur) the outside of a ball."[28] However, since "nature has imposed the law that no art exists that does not begin from faulty origins,"[29] the painter is encouraged to depart from the mathematical, natural reproduction. He must alter his subject matter and correct the defects of nature.

> The painter... is allowed to correct, as far as possible, any defects in his model while still maintaining a likeness (similitudine)." [De pictura] [30]

Aesthetic transformation, however, always takes its start in nature. Alberti revamps the tale of Narcissus to show how the origin of art begins with an act of imitation in nature.

> I used to tell my friends that the inventor of painting, according to the poets, was Narcissus... What is painting but the act of embracing, by means of art, the surface of the pool? [De pictura] [31]

Narcissus, however, focuses on his reflection uncritically. To create art, imagination has to be applied. This demands that the painter expand his vision and transcend the original narcissistic impulse. The painter must be, as we have seen, adept at creating similitudine, skillfully disassembling and reassembling.

> Because he [Zeuxius] believed that... beauty... could not be discovered in nature in one body alone, he chose from all the youth of the city five outstandingly beautiful girls, so that he might represent in his painting whatever feature of feminine beauty was most praiseworthy in each of them. [De pictura] [32]

In architecture, though the issues are much more complex, Alberti remains to a large degree consistent with the principles worked out much earlier in his theory of painting. The building, so we are told, in De re aedificatoria, "imitates an animal," practically becoming synonymous with nature.[33] Despite this quasi-Narcissistic link between nature and its manmade "imitation," the structure remains incomplete and thus has to be refined through a process of transformation, augmentation and purification. In other words, the ugly has to be concealed, or at least made less obtrusive, and the handsome has to be enhanced.

> Beauty... is obtained by means of ornament, by painting and concealing things that are deformed, and by trimming and polishing that which is handsome, so that the unsightly parts might be rendered in colors less offensive, and the more

> lovely parts, with more delight. If this be granted, we may define ornament to be a kind of heightened brightness and improvement. [De re aedificatoria] [34]

It is the artist's second obligation, following his first to turn to nature, to initiate the above described process of aesthetic transformation. Such augmentation has to be wrought over natural givens, even if they are manmade stand-ins for nature. Alberti even proclaims that "it is a great error to have raised your structure in such a manner that it is incapable of embellishment."[35] The process of aesthetic transformation, of "taking away, increasing, and altering," as described in De re aedificatoria actually constitutes the true aesthetic endeavor.[36] Alberti's aesthetics of pliability and assemblage applies also to the writer, "who gathers, sorts, and reconnects literary pieces like a mosaic."[37]

The aesthetics in which simulation follows imitation finds its least appropriate application in sculpture. Since sculpting, so Alberti argues in De statua, is defined as only a process of "removal," the artist can aspire only to making an imitation of "the real natural object."[38] Alberti argues that in sculpting one can aim at a simulacrum as opposed to an exact imitation, but precisely how this is to be achieved in a substance such as stone is not explained.[39] Alberti seems to have written De statua mainly to propagandize his invention, the orrizonte, which enabled the sculptor to take precise measurement from three-dimensional objects.

It is not insignificant that Baptista never sculpts anything from stone. Rather, we are told that he prefers to model with clay and wax.[40] Since modelling in wax is "proceeds by adding and taking away,"[41] something you can't do in stone, it is closer to the dynamics inherent in Alberti's aesthetics. Thus it is an appropriate artistic activity for Baptista.

This improvement of the natural givens relies on the artist's unifying vision. "The judgment regarding the beauty of a thing is not mere opinion, but is innate to the mind."[42] By means of similitudine, the artist moves from the passive imitatio to a dynamic projection through nature of a more perfect form. The vision-to-be-realized is, however, an artifice itself, a mental construct. It is not an ideal of nature, but an ideal of man. Beauty is never inherent in the object, but only in man's imagination. Consequently, over the course of time, Alberti argues, art does not become more perfect, but more varied as artists learn to express their intent with increasing adeptness. In De statua, Alberti notes that "not surprisingly man's studies in creating likenesses (similitudinum) eventually arrived at the stage where,... they were able to make any likeness they wished."[43]

Even external circumstances such as national origin may influence an artist. For example, "the Spaniards think many of their young maidens to be fair when the Germans would consider them to be swarthy and dark."[44] Instead of postulating

a world of pure forms, shapes, or concepts, Alberti is relativistic.[45] Clearly, the latitudes and freedoms of choice bring in its wake an ethical responsibility for the artist.

It has frequently been held that Alberti's aesthetics reflect the Neoplatonic leaning of Humanist thought, which certainly cannot be denied as they were inseparable from the intellectual currents of the period. Yet Alberti's "aesthetic" is not Neoplatonic in the conventional sense. According to the Neoplatonists, as is well known, the artist represents not what he sees, but a more perfect form that lies behind the natural object. Alberti's artist also does not represent what he sees, and in that sense one could hold him to be Neoplatonic. However, his ideal is not a return to the immutable reality behind nature, but rather is a movement away from nature towards a flexible, manmade image. This image is not a Platonic form since it is not an integrated whole, but an assemblage. Thus the artist's improvement on nature is not a higher form of reality, but a higher form of artifice. It is recognized as less true than nature, but a necessary fiction. The main emphasis is not so much on a perfect product as on a process which betokens the vigor of society able to produce. In other words, the process of production and the will to produce is at stake.

The freedom and potential that are thus inherent in the artistic enterprise are fully understood only by the creative, active, self-referential individual, who, in a

sense, is both artist and art object. He must be able to exploit his prodigious talents to break the outline of his own image --which is exactly what Narcissus did not do-- and coax his being into a larger vision.

> One must not break out in so much praise when nature only has bestowed [its good things] on us by fortune; far more deserving of esteem are the labors, the sweat, and the art and hand of man that add to his honor. [De commodis] [46]

In this way the talented individual, continually dissatisfied, continually forcing his mind (commonefacio is a verb Alberti frequently uses), willfully projects himself via a self-created aesthetic-ontological configuration that is itself part of a differently arranged world.[47] The creative and prodigious individual maps out a rhetorically enlarged domain that allows his identity expansionary potential.

"Be what you would be thought" is a phrase of particular importance for Alberti; it should appear engraved on the walls of churches.[48] In Profugiorum he rewords the same thought, pointing out the powers inherent in the concept of active simulation. "In simulating we become what we want to appear."[49]

Baptista represents the epitome of this ontological theory of aesthetic simulation, and is in essence, an example or demonstration of a transcendent narcissistic image. Much like any artwork, Baptista is a quasi-autonomous artifice himself, which, having been enlarged beyond humanly possible perimeters, is suitable as a proper focus for Alberti's own

simulative propensity. He is not the ideal, organically whole man, but rather is a composite, like Zeuxiu's painting. Not only, as we have seen, is he a man of extraordinary talent, insight, athletic prowess, virtue, and generosity, but is a being created by God, constructed with only the best elements nature has to offer.

> God provided him with a form and a body suited to every sort of movement, to enable him to perceive and flee from that which threatened to harm and oppose him. He gave him speech and judgment so that he would be able to seek and find what he needed and could use. He gave him movement and sentiment, desire and the power of excitement so that he might clearly appreciate and pursue useful things and shun those things that are harmful and dangerous. He gave him intelligence, teachability, memory, and reason, qualities divine in themselves and which enabled him to investigate, distinguish, and know what to avoid and what to desire in order to best preserve himself. To these great gifts, admirable beyond measure, God added still another power of the spirit and mind, namely, moderation. To curb greed and excessive lusts, He gave him modesty and the desire for honor. [Della Famiglia] [50]

This "man" described in Della Famiglia is the simulative ideal toward which Baptista strives. As a fictional combination of all the extraordinary virtues known to man, he is not universal, but belongs to an elite group of individuals worthy of eternal memory. His being is a type of mathematical set of elements which can be added to, or rearranged, in order to form other Baptistian figures. For example, Ulysses, as described in Profugiorum, takes on Baptistian qualities. Alberti's interest in Homer should come as no surprise. Ulysses was the ultimate voyager in search for the homeland.

> What wisdom was in such an incredible man [Ulysses]; what an incredible and rare steadiness! Oh what an example worthy of memory among mortals... How sweet our life would be if all mortals were as good as you! [Profugiorum] [51]

Alberti's efforts to define the nature of Baptista have their origin not only in an ontological aesthetic, but also in a literary theory that focuses special interest on the eulogy. The practices of aesthetic simulation and rhetorical exaggeration are parallel and form two of the essential features of Alberti's cultural critique. It is in the eulogy, according to Aristotle, that the method of personality enhancement is most appropriately applied and accepted.[52] All people praise and tolerate the mechanics of this fiction as a form of metaphoric elevation of human existence.

The eulogy figures prominently in several of Alberti's works, one being his dialogue Defunctus, where the dead Neofrono ("Alberti") recounts the oration given to him by a bishop. The eulogy could equally apply to Baptista.

> "O you, Neofrono, the wisest among men, the most just and most happy, whose memory we are celebrating now with praise, certainly inadequate; how much better would it have been if we had esteemed you higher when you were alive! What honors, what esteem would not have been appropriate to have been circulated publicly in your life, you, who are now dead and mourned on such a grand scale by us? How we hold in highest consideration your memory, your excellent virtue, known among men and the object of universal admiration!"
>
> "Where is the place worthy of your merit? You will certainly bring dignity and illustriousness to Olympus itself. Oh Virtue distinguished! Oh the memory of this man, such a good man! Oh what a man, fellow citizens, that you have been deprived of now that nature has torn him away from this city. Oh

> very happy are those to whom you have been given as a fellow citizen by the love of God, so immensely good! Oh very unhappy, those who have lost you, exhorter and master of imitating the most sublime virtue and highest glory. They will be happy, however, if they have preserved in their soul, the memory of the echo of your virtue and fame." [Defunctus] [53]

Alberti (Neofrono) then admits that this eulogy is "exaggerated" and "absurd." Furthermore, "it is fragmented, noisy, and unconnected."[54] Still, he concedes that there is a certain value in such orations.

> NEOFRONO: I have to admit a certain pleasure made me attentive, but I am not able to say how or why. I only know that I myself was enjoying the fact that someone was praising me even if I recognize it as false. [Defunctus] [55]

Neofrono is hesitant to accept the eulogy since he questions the orator's intentions, suspecting an evil motivation. However, Alberti's own intentions respect Baptista are, of course, impeccable, and thus the social advantages gained from such self-definition are beyond reproach. In fact, Alberti goes so far as to claim that Baptista's only true purpose is to expose evil. "Our real business," Alberti comments in the Vita "is always to expose, by the very excellence of our conduct, those persons who are liars and frauds."[56] The good and virtuous recognize Baptista as one of their own and praise his efforts, while evil men are provoked by his presence and commit acts of jealousy and hatred.

> I [Baptista] will withstand you easily since with your lies you clarify for me who you are and who I am. By acting this way, you make your lies clear to all. [Vita] [57]

In his often ignored panegyric Canis (1441), a tongue-in-cheek eulogy on his dog, Alberti, in spite of the irony implicit in the situation, begins with a very serious theoretical debate on the function of the eulogy in contemporary literature. He holds that there has been an increase in the writer's ability to create rhetorical images as compared to ancient times "when excellent men first began proclaiming in their writings the immortality and virtue of their contemporaries."[58] This practice soon caught on and "things went so far, that some, not satisfied simply with praise and honor, raised with their writings the reputation of someone who had behaved most virtuously to the point where they were called gods."[59] Alberti then points out that now we can even create things which have never existed in reality. "Besides all this, others invented fabulous things that could not be absolutely believed, only to praise and exalt virtue."[60] Virtue, we should always remember, is defined by Alberti, as Virtue-Talent.

When Alberti then turns his attention to his deceased dog, we find that the dog is endowed with all the characteristics typical of Baptista (!). He is prudent, the paragon of virtue, brave, and blessed with a singular talent and moral wisdom. Furthermore, he is knowledgeable of all the liberal arts! Naturally, he came from an ancient and illustrious lineage: his father was Megastomo (Gr. Big Mouth). His image is even linked with all the famous men and heroes of the past.[61]

In a sense, Baptista has to be viewed as a eulogy incarnate, a contradiction in terms, to be sure. Yet it is typical of Alberti's willful originality. Modern discourse, in Alberti's perception, has a very limited purpose, namely, to praise virtue and exalt talent even if it is something no longer tied to the reality of individual existence. This is necessary not because of a tendency toward formalism and sophistry, but because the stresses that evil place on society have become so great that only exaggeration and over-compensation on the side of the good will have any effect.

> Similar to a sailor, if the wind presses on one side, you lean and stand toward the other... So it will happen that your course through life, above the waves and the storms of the living, will follow impartially and very safely. [Profugiorum] [62]

The aggressive tumult of life forces the creative mind to project itself by becoming assertive to a commensurate degree lest it lose its balancing function. Fortunately, the contemporary creative talent, no longer limited to the unimproved image that the surface of the pool reflects, has acquired a timely capacity for transformation which allows the artist to explore, safely and profitably, the realm beyond the "absolutely believed."

III

GREAT MEN, GREAT STRUCTURES

The definition of Baptista is not only based on Alberti's aesthetic and rhetorical theories, but also on Alberti's understanding of authorship. Baptista is the Albertian author par excellence.

As we have seen, Baptista's attributes are much too carefully constructed, and much too closely related both to Alberti's theory of aesthetics and to his theory of the literary task to be simply the result of the excesses of the autobiographic genre. Not only is Baptista a personalized ontological ideal, but he is a purposefully designed "great man."

> Great men are distinguished from ordinary men in the same way as beautiful people from plain ones, or as an artfully painted object from a real one, namely, in that which is dispersed has been gathered into one. [Aristotle][1]

Indeed, Alberti's Baptista is a conglomerate of attributes. He was part saint (St. Potiti), part victim of Fortuna (Ulysses),[2] part literary prince (Hadrian),[3] part philosopher (Seneca) and of course, part genius (Alberti).

Some of Baptista's attributes are "celestial and divine," while others are collected from the "most beautiful and noble among mortal things."[4]

Whatever the classical sources, there can be no doubt that Alberti is thoroughly in accord with early Renaissance Humanism, which saw history as the result of the actions and genius of great men. Petrarch's De viris illustribus, a world chronicle of thirty-two famous men became the paradigm of Renaissance historiography.[5] According to Petrarch, men make history by controlling fortune and by the strength of inner virtue that enables them "to perform deeds worthy of being remembered and imitated by posterity."[6] Lombardo della Seta, who completed Petrarch's voluminous work, emphasized the didactic nature of Petrarch's choice of famous men.

> Always keep in sight these men whom you ought to be eager to love because of the greatness of their deeds.[7]

The theme of heroic greatness soon became central to early fifteenth-century historiographers. Mateo Palmieri, for example, had begun an exhaustive description of famous contemporaries in his De temporibus suis.[8] It was to be a history beginning with Adam and ending in 1442. His friend Leonardo Bruni also wrote, among other things, a history of famous Florentines. Even Alberti's own cousin, Antonio Alberti had written an Istoria illustrium virorum.[9]

What makes Alberti's Baptista unusual is simply that when Alberti introduced the theme of a personal transcendent

interlocutor, he definitely was not one of the *uomini famosi* that he makes himself out to be. In 1438 when he wrote his *Vita*, at age thirty-four, he was working only as an *abbreviatore* at the curia and had not yet engaged in any architectural work. Apart from the status of his post --which was shared with over a hundred others-- he had little power, little money, and little influence. At best, he was known in a small circle of *literati*. Yet, the *Vita* shows a man "famous," and "known by not a few princes," and "loved by all."[10] He was followed by admirers who "collected the utterances of his mouth as he walked."[11] Furthermore, the Baptista of the *Vita* is so secure in his civic standing that he does not need to wear the "purple robes" of his high office.[12] To top everything off, Alberti glowingly describes Baptista as "*meritamente elivato*."[13]

There can be no doubt that Baptista, an artificially created great man, was meant to precipitate the reputation of his author. He is after all Alberti's own simulative ideal. As Alberti states in *Profugiorum*, he would not "leave for those after us nothing but a grave with a stone and family insignia."[14]

> Our aim, is not to rot in the harbor, but to plow long paths through the sea, always in search for praise and the fruit of glory. [*Profugiorum*] [15]

Alberti claims in *St. Potiti* that there are three paths by which one can become great: enter business or politics, become a soldier, or write.[16] The first two were for Alberti

clearly out of question. His family was no longer a real political force and, therefore, could not give him the kind of assistance that Leonardo Bruni, for example, had obtained from his family. Unlike Gianozzo Manetti, the suave and polished diplomat, Alberti was, as he himself admits, taciturn and irascible, and thus probably unable to function as a diplomat or public representative of the pope.[17] Nor were Alberti's aristocratic ideals compatible with the aspirations of the courtier's life. His illegitimacy also should not be overlooked. The pope had to write two special bulls exempting Alberti from a ban on illegitimates to allow him to work in the curia.[18] This no doubt was a reciprocal action to respond to past favors received by the papacy from the erstwhile wealthy Alberti family.[19]

It must have been apparent to Alberti early on that his chance of succeeding in the political arena was limited. It was, therefore, presumably not simply self-denial that led Alberti to state in the Vita that he was "distant to all [political] ambition."[20] The young Alberti, when he wrote De commodis et incommodis literarum (The Advantages and Disadvantages of Writing), had clearly set his sights on the last of the three possibilities outlined in St. Potiti.

Not only does he state unequivocally that he wants to be recognized as a writer, but that he strives for nothing less than immortality. In De commodis, Alberti admits outright that he "did not want to end up old and unknown in

writing."[21] He claims to have labored intensely not only for personal edification but also "out of a desire to receive the fame that through literature I thought I would be able to reach."[22] At the end of the treatise, he summarizes his position

> Writing is pleasurable, very useful in obtaining praise and glory, and very suitable in producing the fruit which one transmits to posterity to become immortal. [De commodis] [23]

Even late in life, although he was by then widely acclaimed for his architectural accomplishments, he would maintain that writing alone was sufficient to bring him lasting immortality.

> As the hand that warms and prepares wax so as to better receive the impression and seal of a gem, so writing prepares the mind for all functions and rewards of glory and immortality. [Profugiorum][24]

However, even Alberti's literary aspirations were not as self-understood as they might seem. His talents were not as great as Poggio's, whose pen was in hot demand by pope and king alike.[25] Nor was Alberti's writing as clear (or as shallow) as Manetti's, who toed the official papal line always carefully, ingratiating himself by observing the proper formalities.[26] And, unlike Bruni, Alberti showed little interest in propagandizing the Florentine intellectual circle.[27]

Alberti's interest in writing did not follow conventional patterns. He saw Humanism as lacking a clear-cut image of the the function of the author in society. Baptista is a

hypothetically forwarded possibility in Alberti's comprehensive investigation into the task of the contemporary author. This rhetorically-expanded self, though perhaps rooted in Alberti's own literary ambition, is consequently like the other Albertian authors discussed --Leopis, Agnolo, Philoponius-- a theoretical construct, but on a much larger and more comprehensive level.

Contrary to generally-held impressions, Alberti defines the author in a manner that represents in essence a critique of Humanism itself. Alberti argues that the blending of the literary endeavor with political motives would result in irreparable contamination. Since Baptista is identical with Virtue, Baptista must remain like Virtue "immortal and incorruptable."[28] Consequently, "those who wish to apply themselves to writing... should flee these places [government] in which they can find themselves without any public dignity."[29] This is a position that strikes at the very heart of early Humanism. Petrarch, Salutati, Poggio, Bruni, Dati and others were all writers who placed their talents whole-heartedly in the service of political establishments.

Alberti's thesis of the independent "author" was held despite the fact that he himself owed his livelihood to the curia. He insisted that writing could serve its purpose of social transformation only when it is not harnessed to a power system, Only if literature is untethered to the dictates of others, can it reflect the wishes of Virtue. The

Albertian author, avoiding the more conventional means to fame, can remain independent and uncontaminated.

> He [Philoponius] yearned to set himself above the rich and powerful simply on the basis of his literary accomplishments. [Pupillus] [30]

Baptista is, therefore, defined as a uomo famoso not because of any great political accomplishments, but, on the contrary, (and ironically) because he does not enter into the arena of the real world but holds himself just outside of it, entering it only in a controlled and deliberate manner, and at his own choosing. In Scriptor, for example, the protagonist was absent from public life for nearly a month; "I have been ... striving to sow the seeds of my reputation as a writer."[31] In the Vita, we read: "I withdrew for over ninety days" to write Della Famiglia.[32] These retreats not only give the writer peace and quiet, but, more important, enable him to thwart the "confining censure of the masses (ar(c)tissima censura plebe)," [33] and the "snares (insidiis)" that accompany public life.[34]

In order to maintain the precarious balance between fact and rhetorically enhanced myth the writer must stay aloof. Even the architect is advised to resist the temptation inherent in his profession to become entrapped in the public world. If he gives in, he no longer is in control of his own reputation.

> A prudent man should take care to maintain his reputation.... If, however, you undertake to supervise and complete the work yourself, you will find it difficult to avoid being made answerable

> for all the faults and mistakes committed through the ignorance and negligence of man. [De re aedificatoria] [35]

Nevertheless, the Albertian author is never portrayed as so disdainful of public life that he closes himself up in private reverie. Petrarchian solitude is antithetical to the operative nature of Alberti's cultural theory. The writer, as Alberti descibes him, does not use his withdrawal as an escape, but as a preparation for his emergence into the public sphere. The Albertian author can thus sidestep the detractors and critics, and at the same time, supply the literary documents necessary to insure that his own immortality is grounded in mythological timelessness. This guarantees the continuity of his cultural endeavor.

Standing on the fringes of the documented world the Albertian author can realize a powerful advantage in creating and maintaining his own reputation. He can inhabit his image without having to be answerable to reductive fact. His claims, which have a higher purpose not easily recognized by the mob, need not be corroborated nor defended in the debased, real world. As long as his aim is the exaltation of virtue there can be no question of deceit.

Projecting his author as an independent lay saint, Alberti could define him as bypassing both politics and religion in his entry into the world. What, however, is the power that legitimizes his creativity? From whence does he derive his authority to write? Alberti solves this dilemma by

asserting that the command placed on Baptista to be "great" comes from nature. It is nature, and not the corrupted human establishment, which demands of him that he, like all great men, produce great things. Only for this reason can he remain the ideal man, described in Fatum et Fortuna, who is "simple and uncontaminated (simplices, et omni ex parte incorrupti)."[36] And so Baptista in the Vita is exhorted by nature to accomplish his mission.

> Seeing the fields flower in springtime,.. he would be seized with melancholy and thus rebuke himself. "Baptista, you must give man the fruit of your studies." [Vita] [37]

And this he did. "He gave every artist copies of his great and worthy treatises."[38] In his open commitment to cultural continuity, he also gave his works to the scholars, in a calculated effort to draw from them praise and admiration. Alberti, i.e. Baptista, wanted it to be understood that his writings were demanded of him by nature, and that he had no other choice but to comply and give to mankind the fruits of his wisdom. Thus, his purity is guaranteed (and legitimized), and his works could be esteemed as worthy of posterity.

> And in sculpture and in painting,... he [i.e., Baptista] was especially studious, desiring to neglect nothing that would gain for him the esteem of learned people. [Vita] [39]

On the one hand, we have Baptista, a necessary fiction, and, on the other, the treatises, conceived within the frame of mind of Baptista who then delivers them to the world. He

fulfills a contract of natural transmittance. Consequently, Baptista and De pictura, conceived within a few years of each other, constitute the two essential elements of Alberti's literary strategy. "We erect great structures so that posterity may suppose us to have been great persons."[40] Baptista, unmistakably designed as a "great person" of epic proportion, is destined to erect "great structures." These cannot be anything but De pictura and De re aedificatoria. It is this link between a literary ontology and an artifact assigned to that ontological frame of mind that Alberti hoped would elevate him into the realm of history --"to leave for posterity a reputation not only based on knowledge but also on power."[41]

In Alberti's eyes the power of the text radiates an uncontaminated, natural attraction for the truly learned. Like "Ennio, the poet," the names of Alberti's "authors" should "hover on the lips of cultured men."[42] Thus in De pictura Alberti outlines with unabashed frankness the reasons why De pictura deserves the esteem of the learned. It is portrayed as the zero point of a new historical axis. "I was the first to write about this most subtle art [of painting]."[43] Writers, Alberti suggests, had neglected the art of painting, though its art replicated a healthy soicety. Alberti sets out to remedy this omission and becomes in his own eyes simultaneously an archaeologist and a prophet, linking the future with the past in a novel and enhanced configuration.

> If the art of painting was once written by others, we have rediscovered it and restored it to light from the dead. If it was never treated before, we have brought it down from the heavens. [De pictura] [44]

Lest the reader forget the author's efforts or belittle the value of such literature as a legitimate path to greatness, Alberti warns in the closing paragraphs of De pictura, that "You should remember that in matters of great importance (the theory of painting ?!) the desire to achieve what is most difficult is regarded as worthy of praise."[45]

Alberti's strategy of producing his own legacy for posterity was in the long run to prove successful, so successful that his strategy was never discovered as such, but accepted at face value. The short-term effect was far different. Alberti's death was hardly noticed by his contemporaries, probably as a result of his lack of true social status. Upon his death, he received only a terse entry in Mattia Palmieri's compendium of famous men, De temporibus suis.

> Leon Baptista Alberti, a man of most refined doctrine and intelligence, and the author of a remarkable book on architecture, died in Rome.[46]

Had Alberti not arranged for ten choir boys whom he commissioned to sing for his soul on All Soul's Day, his name would hardly have been on anyone's lips, at least not until the following century when his writings began to surface and his strategy began to pay off.[47]

Alberti seems to have anticipated just such "death," namely, one in which his legacy was destroyed and ignored. In Defunctus, from Intercoenales I, Alberti recounts how Neofrono ("Alberti" exiled in death) had not only witnessed with horror the infidelity of his wife, the scandals of his children, but above all the dismantling of his library by relatives. Neofrono wants to remind the upper world that "posterity is grateful for one's lucubrations," but communication with the upper world is impossible, and the relatives proceed to subdivide his library.[48] Upon relating how his literary identity was annihilated, Neofrono bemoans the vicissitudes of the literary profession. His writings were ripped apart and used by his relatives to wrap up perfume that was taken from his house.

> NEOFRONO: My literary works, created by my own hands, elaborated with such care in the course of lucubrative vigils, were, in large part, already refined. They tore apart my works to use the sheets to wrap perfume in!
>
> POLITROPO: Oh! What a tremendous sin!
>
> NEOFRONO: It seems I spent my whole existence producing only the most erudite of wrapping paper; I witness the humiliating descent of my studies, my vigils and all my hopes. [Defunctus] [49]

Stoicism receives its final ironical legitimization as Politropo attempts to teach Neofrono to endure his pain silently and with strength. Ghosts are stoics by necessity.

Baptista was intended to catapult Alberti to fame and establish his reputation in posterity. He had to be a worthy vehicle as on him rested the author's future fate. Much as

Alberti had projected himself backwards into the past in Philodoxeus to establish his myth in history, so too did he project himself by means of Baptista into the future, thereby establishing in his own person a metaphor for historical continuity.

Baptista was launched in the métier of pure textuality, subject to the rules of its own autonomy. As a personalized textual construct, Baptista can survive the precarious present, and establish a continuity that is not guaranteed to the undramatized real-life Alberti, who has to cope as best he can in a world controlled by politicians, soldiers and misguided authors.

Alberti has provided for history the necessary bipolar constellation of man and product, a constellation that for him defines the essential characteristics of literature. A "great man" erects "a great structure," so as to appear great. Both man and structure are fiction --artifice. Yet, there is no deceit involved since Baptista and "his" texts are in defense of virtue and reason. Author and text cancel fiction and transform it into a higher reality.

IV

THE TEMPLE IN THE CLEARING

For Baptista to be a great man he has to survive society's turmoil. He has to show the way into the future. In this chapter we shall discuss the steps that are essential for the attainment of a transcendent condition such as Baptista's. Many of the ideas are clearly in the mainstream of late medieval, early Renaissance thought. Nevertheless Alberti removes the abstractness of late medieval ethics. His interest lies in proving that the talented, for whom Baptista is a stand-in, are subject to the demands of Virtue. They have to offer in their being a purified ground so that society can find its sense of origin.

Baptista plays the central role in Alberti's inventive and anxious drama of cultural continuity. He is the true inheritor of a noble line. As an aesthetic creation founded in Virtue, his beauty attracts the good. He is also a great author who communicates his wisdom out of a pure and natural instinct. However, in order to be functional he must also be steeped in the substance of life and fight loose from it. Baptista's suffering in the world is the central element in Alberti's cultural theory. Baptista, orphaned, exiled, attacked, mistreated, robbed, rejected, provoked, ignored, and insulted, --to name only some of the themes-- wears all the marks of his struggle with these evils proudly like medallions. Baptista must transcend his psychic stress in a

visible and demonstrative manner. "Few are those men," Alberti writes, "who can suffer these hardships with a complete and equitable soul"[1] And even fewer, we can almost hear him add, are those who can also share the wisdom gained by their experiences.

Only a person of Baptista's stature can survive the seemingly infinite perils. "The world is full of human variety, differences of opinion, changes of heart, perversity of customs, as well as moral ambiguity, and obscurity of values."[2] Furthermore, "it is full of fraudulent, false, perfidious, reckless, audacious, and rapacious people."[3]

This multifaceted insidious face of evil makes the struggle for transcendence particularly difficult because of the propensity of man to simulate that which is around him. According to Alberti there must be an awareness of the difference between what he calls "excellent simulation" and "false simulation." Baptista, of course, is in essence a demonstration of the former, but also a simulative ideal in himself. In Profugiorum ab aerumna (Refuge from Mental Anguish), Alberti explains that anyone who has set himself on the path toward self-consciousness must begin by what he calls "excellent simulation."[4]

Since we are free to choose any simulation we want, we must be careful not to simulate the bad. By going through the motions of virtue, one accustoms one's soul to virtue. Just as "one can't paint or write without painting or writing,"

Alberti notes, so one can't be virtuous without exercising oneself with virtuous acts.[5] Little by little they bring one closer to spirituality.[6]

By "imitating the most sublime virtue and highest glory,"[7] the individual can slowly chip away at the sinister part of his being which attempts to lure him into the camp of the multitude, where variety covers up evil. In Profugiorum, Agnolo, here Alberti as earth-bound man, confesses that he cannot completely exclude the sinister from his being.[8] Agnolo is not like Baptista, who exemplifies the virtuous soul already victorious.

Whereas Agnolo is aware that he must struggle with the unruly, sinister forces, we can be sure that he is on the path to virtue. In contrast, the common man lets himself become victimized by the sinister soul and becomes entangled in the perversity of the times, thereby adds to the growing momentum of society toward falsehood and self-destruction. In Momus, one of Alberti's bleakest and most cynical writings, Alberti warns of man's capacity to simulate in a negative sense. Someone who leaves the "path toward the abundant good" takes on the characteristics of the surrounding monstrous and ruinous landscape and thus turns into a monster.[9]

Simulation is for Alberti an innate and irrepressible capacity of man. "We mourn with the mourners, laugh with those who laugh and grieve with the grief-stricken," Alberti notes in De pictura.[10] Because man is like a chamelion, he

must resist the tendency to leave the direct path. Once he leaves he can only return through "false simulation" by applying a mask to cover up the ugly and monsterlike evil that he has encountered along the way and assimilated from the wasteland that is the contemporary scene.[11] The efforts of those who have abandoned the path, "the "vicious, rapacious, and ambitious ones," whom Alberti describes disdainfully in De Iciarchia, are forevermore worthless and suspect. They have learned to manipulate man's capacity to "dissimulate and simulate at will,"[12] in the service of evil. "Their studies, their will, and deliberations are repugnant and totally opposite [to the good]."[13] As a consequence, Agnolo laments, "We live in a state today where everything is said and done in a false and simulated manner."[14]

> Asked whom he thought to be the worst of men, he answered, the wicked ones who want to behave like good ones. [Vita] [15]

To stay on the path of excellent simulation, the individual must deliberately, almost fanatically, avoid contact with the bad.

> In order not to follow the damnation and the gloom of the world, one must resist like a ferocious beast. [Epistola consolatoria] [16]

Almost like a medieval Neoplatonist, Alberti argues that truth is in itself luminous and deserves to be emulated.

> Because things that are true and good are luminous and clear in themselves... they are attractive, and appear desirable to us.... The things that are not good lie in the shadow of some vile and dirty pleasure or of some wicked inclination, whatever it may be. They are not things that we truly want, but ones that we ought to flee from. Follow the light,

> escape the darkness. The light of our deeds consists in truth and spreads by praise and fame. [Della Famiglia] [17]

To flee from the gloom and pursue the cause of truth nothing less than rigorous self-control will do. "The writer," so Alberti states in De commodis, "if he desires to attain fame and glory, should isolate himself at home and keep everything away which is outside and which is destracting even if "pleasant and worthy of admiration."[18]

This withdrawal is forced upon the writer not because he should shun the wickedness of pleasure, but because he must avoid disillusionment. Pleasure is itself neither good nor bad, but through pleasure, the writer can come in contact with the masses and their moral vagaries. "The masses are always inconstant, weak, unstable, volatile, nuisances, useless, bestial, slothful, and guided by error...."[19] The energies of the talented are especially taxed when they come in contact with this outside world. Thus, self-enforced isolation is a necessity. The artist has to protect his introspective domain.

> AGNOLO: Today the common people are at the theater, but I will try to ignore their pleasure. I will close myself up among my books and I will be alone. If you decide to act thus, the persuasions of others, and even things you may not think of, will not turn you away from your duty. However, if you faithfully pay attention to things that will turn you away from this purpose, luring your soul toward pleasure, then you will not be well inclined and steady in supporting yourself. And if you don't refuse to give in to your wishes, then you will be regretful, and in regretting you won't be free. Thus, extinguish and stifle that thought. Refuse

> all reason and conditions that interrupt the cultivation of your virtue. [Profugiorum] [20]

Introspection, however, is not always easy considering the immensity of the effort that is required to bolster oneself against the onslaught of evil forces. In De Iciarchia, for example, Alberti allegorically expresses this difficulty by comparing the rising of the Arno River over its banks to the arbitrary inundation of the work of man.[21] Yet, the creative intellect has no choice; he must remain sovereign. "Only the mind that is free from all turbulence can resist victoriously against all assaults from Fortuna."[22]

> AGNOLO: It happens frequently, when placed among envious, provocative and turbulent men, who, with their fury darting at me from here and from there, that I remain so taken by other investigations that I willingly do not care about them. It matters little whether they be greeting Caesar or [if it is only] some parrot shouting "cher cher." I hear nothing, and see nothing, nothing that is but myself. [Profugiorum] [23]

Here, Alberti addresses the dilemma facing the creative individual, namely, how the reflective and introverted author, who must shirk vulgar contacts and protect his psyche, can simultaneously perform his moral obligation to contribute to the welfare of society. Introversion, so Alberti argues, is not an escape into the blissful tranquility of a private villa or into monastic solitude, but is a bracketing of one's vision. Introversion enables the author to remain in society, both physically and spiritually, so that at the right moment he can give to the unproductive the products of his own creativity, returning evil with love.

Baptista exemplifies the creative individual surrounded by people who are relentlessly evil and negligently unproductive; yet he remains thanklessly committed to his mission.

> As he [Baptista] became increasingly famous and was in a position to return to his ruthless offenders tit for tat, he preferred to pay them back with courtesy and kindness... Love conquers indignation. [Vita anonyma] [24]

Baptista's task to filter out evil is held out as a simulative suggestion for the artist, who is advised in De pictura consciously to eliminate all that is unfit.

> We learn as time goes on to hate work that is dark and horrid, and the more we learn, the more we attune our hand to grace and beauty. By nature we love things that are open and bright. [De pictura] [25]

"We" of course does not mean mankind in general, but "Baptista" and his pupils, who will not be painters in the narrow professional sense, but rather will be that Albertian type of uomini famosi responsible for cultural preservation. It is the burdensome responsibility of the "author" to represent the antithesis of false simulation and to stoically persist even when hope seems lost.

> AGNOLO: In this age so full of envy and perversity, that which should be praised and approved of is vituperated by all.... Nevertheless, Baptista, continue with your work so as to be useful to your fellow citizens. [Profugiorum] [26]

Resistance and introspection are the first elements in the conscious rejection of the false; premeditation follows. Premeditation is an essential and necessary prerequisite of a virtuous life that rounds off the path toward self-con-

sciousness. The moral imperative must be given time to orient itself properly within the soul and this is only possible in premeditation.

Premeditation thus allows man, despite the infernal struggle against external forces, to remain productive. The creative individual must find inner resources to remain at peace with himself and the world. "Within us there must be that premeditation and inclination of the soul to exclude and forbid all perturbation."[27] In the tranquility of meditative self-consciousness, there is a world where nothing is arbitrary or accidental. Premeditation is a sanctuary, a Profugium, an area of repose that protects artistic activity and allows the creative energies to rise to the surface.

This theme is reinforced in a piece from the Intercoenales II. Alberti describes a temple in which there is a painting entitled "Cultivation of Virtue, Daughter of Peace." Virtue, armed with a knife, "prunes back the brambles" and "with her foot clears an area so as to make it larger."[28] This clearing is equivalent to the primal act of realization. Once an ontological space has been prepared, all activities of the artist, whether physical or mental, can be mapped out.

To leave the clearing and wander about the ruinous landscape would be disastrous. The painters, as described in De pictura, would find themselves "wandering, fearful and virtually sightless, in the darkness of error and unknown paths and exits."[29] For this reason, Alberti warns in a short

essay Pythagorean Sentences: The Most Useful for a Good and Happy Life, "Make and say nothing without premeditation."[30] This is an admonition clearly relevant to the artist. "The painter imitates with his hand" only what "he has already understood in his mind."[31] That which he has understood "in his mind" is constructed on the firm ground of the premeditated clearing.

Alberti is well aware that dangers lurk from within the psyche as well as from without. The clearing cannot remain empty, but must be filled. In order to prevent that it be filled with "false simulation," Alberti insists that it be filled by artistic production. If this does not happen, new dangers arise. Internally created anxieties, so Alberti points out, are a more insidious danger to the psyche than are the seductions and torments from the outside world. A soul that is unable to establish the proper hierarchy of importance will invariably find itself destroyed.

> AGNOLO: The soul should never be lazy; it should always turn and wrap itself up in investigations or in the disposition to learn things, which if they are important and worthy are learned in such a way that the soul can be satisfied. In this case, the soul is so full that nothing more can be dipped into it. If, however, it goes after things that are light, these things will float on the waves of our mind, and it will happen that our thoughts will roll about hitting against some reef or some sharp memories or hardened will. [Profugiorum] [32]

In the case where the individual does not engage in productive activity and leaves the ontological space unused, so Alberti argues, he will develop an obsessive need for pal-

liatives to overcome the gnawing "vacuity of the soul."[33] Even the most creative of minds can easily be seduced by the inane suggestions of Fortuna, who waits for her chance to assert her malicious power. Alberti describes, for example, how a renowned philosopher is reduced to "weaving small baskets," and how a prince "kept a clean sow, washed it in a basin, and cradled it in his arms like a baby."[34]

A soul filled with virtuous thoughts and productive actions will allow no room for fickle Fortuna's entrance. Premeditation, will serve not only to assist in the exclusion of the violent exterior, but also to thwart the actions of Fortuna and bring out the inherent and innate productivity of man. The "remedies" suggested by Agnolo for himself are far different from the remedies of those mentioned above, who have lost themselves along the way.

> AGNOLO: To alleviate the disturbing memories, turbulent thoughts, and agitations of the mind,... we must reach directly for our remedies. So don't question us if we establish within ourselves a good reason of life, if we devote ourselves to praised practices, if we insist on investigating worthy and beautiful things and if we fill our endeavors with virtue and firmness. Certainly only with peace, happy quiet, and worthy tranquility of soul, will we be able to master the adversities of life, the unpleasantness of laziness, fatigue, pain, and misfortune, and, above all, the wickedness, cruelty and iniquity of humanity. [Profugiorum] [35]

In conceiving the psyche as a clearing, shielded against the ravages of the exterior world and protecting the virile essence of one's creative being, the artist, like Baptista, can secure his moral footing and have faith that in

the tranquility of premeditation, virtue will shine forth. However, "virtue and firmness" are only the means to the more important end which is always to link virtue and productivity with reason. In De commodis, Alberti argues that virtue forms the "foundation" on which "reason is constructed and stabilized."[36] Reason is the structure, built in the protected ontological space, that brings virtue into a three-dimensional reality. It is like a column, to borrow yet another architectural metaphor from Alberti.

> AGNOLO: It happens to us much as a pillar. If it keeps itself erect and well sustained within itself, it supports not only itself but the heavy weight from above, but this same pillar deviating from straightness by its load and its own heaviness falls into ruin. So it is with our soul. As long as it conforms with the rectitude of truth and does not deviate from reason, what load is there that can pull it down? [Profugiorum] [37]

Virtue and reason, as we have already seen, have specific connotations in Alberti's thought. Virtue is defined as the struggle to assert one's talents against the inherent evil of society. For the success of the struggle to be manifest it must transform itself into "reason," which, as defined in Oraculum, is the immediate perception of one's value in society. Unless these two forces are made parallel to each other, Fortuna can sabotage the entire operation. In the transcendent Baptista, virtue and reason are thus synthesized The talented have no choice but to model themselves on Baptista, "who thinks and acts with virtue and reason."[38]

The metaphor that epitomizes the successful union of all the elements, the clearing, the foundation, and the column, is the "temple." In the opening remarks of Profugiorum ab aerumna, Alberti describes the temple that, on the one hand, represents a struggle against outside perturbations yet, on the other, offers the inner quietude necessary for creative production. It is a thoroughly Christian concept, beginning with Augustine, to associate the human spirit with the concept templum.[39]

> BAPTISTA: The temple has within itself grace and majesty. And as I have often thought about it, I think I see in this temple a pleasant grace combined with a full and strong solidity... Furthermore, here lives, so to speak, a springlike climate. Outside it is windy, chilly, and freezing, but inside, the winds are closed off and the air is tepid and quiet. Outside, there are summer and autumnal blasts; inside, there is a very temperate refreshment. [Profugiorum] [40]

In opposition to mainstream Christian dogma, Alberti, however, makes it very clear that we cannot simplistically ask the gods to bestow virtue and reason on us in order to construct such a temple.[41] The creative individual cannot expect deliverance of the soul from the bondage of sin. On the contrary, he must struggle on his own. If not, "the first justice, light, and splendor of all virtues will accuse you and declare that you have deserted her... for you have degenerated from virility and from the right and straight state of life, abandoning yourself and your duty."[42] One must establish the power of one's will on one's own "as an anchor in water" and "fill each part of one's soul and mind with com-

plete reason," --all this "achieved by talent,"[43]-- and move head-on into the hardships that will descend from all sides.

Only in the end will the survivors find themselves in the temple, constructed on the solid foundation of a powerful will and its more visible superstructure correctly aligned with the forces of reason. Only then will they have successfully transformed themselves into the ontological image of the creative individual, who deports himself within the interior rational space, the sanctuary in a turbulent world full of "enemies of reason."[44]

Perspective becomes the ultimate symbol for this internal world, but, as always, only for those who have broken the bounds of the narcissistic image, not for mankind at large. The talented individual will recognize immediately that the rules of perspective are the self-understood by-product of the Albertian world.

> To talented minds that are well disposed to painting, they [the rules of perspective] are simple and splendid, however presented, but they are disagreeable to gross intellects who are little disposed to the noble arts, even if expounded by the most eloquent writers. [De pictura] [45]

Perspective is born in premeditation, in the striving to simulate a good and happy life, and in the will to exorcise falsity by means of rectitude and artistic production. In following Baptista, the artist can keep darkness at bay, invisible behind the well-reasoned rules of perspective and premeditated moral actions.

This struggle for the temple, as defined by Alberti, is coterminous with the survival of the cultural edifice. Whoever takes upon himself the horrendous task outlined above must answer to the goddess Posterita, who, together with Praise, described in Momus, accompanies Mother Virtue.[46] All well-executed artistic enterprises receive their final validation only in the incorruptible eyes of posterity.

The efforts of Alberti's exalted and troubled Virtue, independent by necessity and conviction, and the forces of posterity, are so well laminated that they by themselves inevitably yield artistic products. The demands of Virtue-Talent are so great that the individual who takes up her defense will be allowed hardly a moment's respite. His reward, however, is that he will be placed in the fluidum of history.

> In order to become accustomed to virtue, we will exercise our thinking, investigating, integrating, composing, and commenting, and thus send into posterity the product of our fatigues and watches. [Profugiorum] [47]

To refer to an Albertian "aesthetic" theory would be to override the fluid and fateful interlocking of creativity and ethics. It is because of this ethical imperative that the artist is conscious of the self-referentiality of the artistic product and its anticipated trajectory in history. "Everything here," so Alberti points out in reference to the temple, "has been done and declared for posterity."[48] For this reason, the "artist," in imitation of Baptista, can

"choose only those things that are most beautiful and worthy."[49]

The thesis that "one should devote oneself to a deserved fame and immortality"[50] is a strategy expected of the talented. They are not only the curators of cultural values but themselves art objects, results of a process of their own transformation into a form that survives the turmoil of life.

V

"SIMILLIMOS INTELLIGANT:" THE MORTAL GODS

The power of the transcendent image derives from the fusion of ontological and epistemological principles into an organic whole. Alberti devises a class of transcendent beings who have the responsibility of guarding society's sanity.

The personae-fragments that Alberti initially introduced to investiagte the problems which dominated his thought became gradually more comprehensive and categorical until Alberti arrived at his boldest concepts. Three figures, other than Baptista, became central to his exposition: the "prince," the "instructor," and "Momus," each symbolizing Alberti's claims in their respective categories: politics, art, and social criticism. They are full fledged functionaries in the service of Alberti's cultural critique. In this chapter we shall deal with the first two.

In De Iciarchia, Alberti argues that humanity is divided into two groups, on the one hand the "rari e pochi," and on the other hand the multitude.[1] Though such a division was an intellectual commonplace, going back all the way to Cicero,[2] Alberti elevates it into a regular postulate. As

always with Alberti we must be careful to give full value to his terms even though they may derive from the common Renaissance repertoire. One could hold, in fact, that he was making an effort to restore meaning to devalued concepts. At any rate he was particularly consistent in the use of these terms. In De re aedificatoria, for example, he also argues for a division of society. We read that "from the multitude one should select a small number," and among this number we find the political and commercial rulers, and the artists.[3] The task of cultural preservation is precariously dependent on these few who are conscious of the importance of their mission.

Alberti's definition of Baptista led him gradually to his definition of the "few." The Prince, in particular, is derived from the concept of Baptista, and not always clearly separable from him. The Prince, as we now understand, is the end result of a trajectory that began with the youthful Peniplusius ("Alberti"). Peniplusius, after the "death" of his father, and after being purged of his resentment against society, became the precocious Baptista, who carried on his shoulders the responsibilities for cultural transmission. The trajectory leads us to the aged Baptista of De Iciarchia who embodies in his person the full fledged reformer, one who explains the prince's function, and becomes quasi-synonymous with him.

Like all of the "few", so Baptista explains, the Prince is "illustrious for his wisdom, experience and talent."[4] He also has Apollo's visionary eye, for "due to prudence, ability, cognition of things, and authority he is able to both induce and rule others towards a good and desired end."[5] He is also endowed with Alberti's most valued tools, the symbolic tools of perspective; they are the insignia of his identity. He is admonished to always make use of these tools.

> BAPTISTA: It is one things to hold in your hand the right angle, the straight edge, and the pen, and it is another to put them to good use. [De Iciarchia][6]

The Prince, like Baptista, has the capacity to demonstrate the highest potential of the human spirit. He can strive for excellence without having to fall back on religion or vice. He functions on a powerful and accomplished level, in spiritual independence, as impeccable model.

The effectiveness of the Prince depends on his singular capacity to convince others, less advanced, to simulate him and use him for guidance and orientation. Since, however, "the art of simulation," so Alberti writes in Momus, was a gift by the goddess Deception at the beginning of time,"[7] the transcendent few must be on guard against the potential evil which lies in the simulative capacity. However, instead of shying away from its use, they must master it's benign application, even if it involves a certain duplicity. As Giannozzo claims, "one fights artifice with artifice (astuzia con astuzia),".[8]

The painter, having been trained in Alberti's aesthetics of "excellent simulation," also manifests *astuzia* in his confrontation with society. The painter's *astuzia*, just as Giannozzo's, resides in a benevolent and virtuous application of creativity. The innate capacity to simulate, man's most specific attribute, must be put to good use by those responsible for cultural continuity lest false simulation become the norm. Consequently, the multitude must be encouraged to simulate the right models.

> BAPTISTA: One must honestly imitate and get accustomed to become similar to those who are just, free, magnificent, magnanimous, prudent, constant and in all aspects of their life follow, uprightly, discretion and reason. [*De Ichiarchia*] [9]

Many, however, are unable to elevate themselves on their own. They cannot bridge the gap, as the benign simulative image is to them incomprehensible and, therefore, unattainable. They are dependent on the "few", agile and flexible, to descend to their level. These disciplined and self-possessed beings are alert to the intermediary stages in human minds not fully evolved and can infiltrate them by a deliberate act of reverse simulation in order to guide those who are lower to greater heights. This, Alberti describes, is "an excellent cleverness *ottima astuzia* which is rare in this world."[10]

Alcibiades, so Alberti claims, should be a model for this (*ottimo artefice*).[11] He excelled in adapting himself to his surroundings.

> In Sparta, the land of thrift and exercise,... he appeared frugal, rugged and unlettered: in Ionia he was delicate and luxurious; in Thrace he learned to drink hard and enjoy himself with these people as well. He knew how to adapt himself to situations so well that in Persia, a land full of pomp and delighting in show, he surpassed Tissaphrenes the king in his haughtiness of manner and magnificece of display. To adapt quickly to situations and to make friends, it is necessary to study the gestures, words, customs, and conversations of others. One must learn what pleases, what saddens each one, what moves him to anger, to laughter, to talk and to silence. [Della Famiglia] [12]

This is the type of simulation Alberti had in mind for the Prince, who must be skilled in infiltrating the mentality of his subjects so that he can assert himself most beneficially. Just as Baptista often "simulated ignorance to discover the talent and ability of others,"[13] the ruler, as is stated in De Iciarchia, must learn to adapt himself, quickly and easily, to the different types of people in his domain.

> BAPTISTA: Various and different are the souls and minds of mankind. Some are quick to anger, some turn easily to kindness, some are acute, suspicious, credulous, contemptuous, experienced, bitter,... [etc. etc.]. It would be profitable that our prudent prince continually explore, probe and understand the mores, life and facts of each of them so that he can give to each an excellent and suitable reason why he is commander, and so that he can adapt the variety of his orders according to the variety of souls. [De Iciarchia] [14]

Of course, the prince must first of all himself display the proper moral bearing.

> BAPTISTA: This emulation, with which you search for fame and glory above all else, comes from the correct bearing of talent and the generosity of spirit, acquired not with slander, but only with the virtue which sits in one. [De iciarchia] [15]

Let us not read this as Humanistic and altruistic pedagogy. While the moral elevation of Baptista and the Prince was an unadulterated good in its own right, the elevation of the masses was a good of a different order. They were to be raised up by way of simulation to allow society to function as frictionlessly as possible. This type of astuzia had already been advocated by Averroes, who saw the inherent divisions in society as potentially lethal to society's functioning.[16] The ultimate task of its leaders was to establish a parallel, but not identical, understanding of what was good for society. The leaders, who had this responsibility, could emulate the lower levels, to guide them toward a goal beneficial for all. Thus, Averroes held that the highest form of intelligence is one that has the capacity to take the form of others. In his treatises Philosophy and Religion he describes a certain Abu Hamid.

> ...others began to think of reconciling the two [philosophy and religion]. It seems that this was the very aim which Abu Hamid had in view in writing these books. He has tried to awaken the nature of men, for he never attached himself to his books. He was an Asharite with the Asharites, a Sufi with the Sufis, and a philosopher with the philosophers, so much so that he was, as has been said [sic]: "I am a Yeminite, when I meet a Yeminite; if I meet a Ma'adi, I am one of Banu Adnan. [17]

As Averroes makes clear these singular individuals do not use their simulative capacities simply to blend in, but to draw men upwards. Similarly, for Alberti, the talented individual must disassemble the resistance of the unlearned for their own benefit. In a remarkable affirmation of the

theory of simulative pedagogy, Alberti explains in Profugiorum that the teacher of dance does not begin by laying down the abstract rules of a theory which the student must learn. Rather, the teacher has to be able to begin with the student's own movements! Only when he has completely empathized with the student can he begin to exert his control. Eventually, a reversal takes place, as the student imitates the teacher. The student thus acquires not only the art of dancing but also comprehends the art of simulation.

> AGNOLO: We will do as the musician. If he wants to teach the youth to dance, he should begin by following the movements of the student with his music, and so, movement by movement, erring less and less, he can teach to the inexperienced one also to err less. [Profugiorum] [18]

Prerequisite to Alberti's epistemological theory is the partial cloaking of intent; such is the astuzia of the teacher. "Your astuteness must not be visible," Giannozzo warns in Della Famiglia.[19] In his Elementa picturae, a technical treatise on geometry, Alberti warns his colleague, Theodorus, to whom he is sending a manual for his classes, that "in order to avoid skepticism, [on the part of the students] I think from the first you should direct the work of your students, before they realize what ends you are determined to accomplish."[20] "At the end," the students "will judge and evaluate us as they wish."[21] However, the instructor, anticipating this, will conduct his writings in a manner that "the students shall be exceedingly grateful."[22] Alberti's instructor is a paradigm for the Prince's actions.

Both aim at correcting society. While the instructor, like Baptista, operates as it were on a theoretical level, the Prince operates on a practical one.

The epistemological responsibility of the "few" thus constitutes a main part of their definition. When Baptista in De pictura states that he is speaking "as a painter to painters,"[23] he is demonstrating his epistemological theory at its best; He is simulating in himself the world of the painter, hoping, thereby, to establish an operative bond of trust between the instructor and the student of painting. In such a way the few act as guardians responsible for ordering the experiences of others.

> The guardians (intelligeret genus), appointed over men, should be some other kind of beings of superior wisdom and greater virtue than common men. [De re aedificatoria] [24]

Boethius, it will be remembered, distinguishes intelligentia from ratio; the former being enjoyed in its perfection only by angels and the deity.[25] It is a type of knowledge that comes directly and simply. It is also the essential trademark of Alberti's transcendent images.

It is no accident that the young Philoponius, as described in Pupillus, was saved from death by some quasi-divine guardians, "intelligentes honestissimi."[26] He was saved because he was destined to join their ranks. However, only after being purged of his resentment could he emerge metamorphosed into Baptista, the ideal guardian-instructor,

who speaks in De pictura in a manner "that is simple and beautiful."[27] Baptista can perfectly simulate a beautiful world, establish trust with his students and lead them on to a frame of mind which is closer to his. Alberti leaves us in little doubt that as a result, the teaching of painting (nota bene the task of Baptista!) is a divinely sanctioned enterprise.

> The virtues of painting are that its instructors, seeing their exertion so praised, feel themselves to be almost simulating God (simillimos intelligant). [De pictura] [28]

Those who do not follow his guidance, as Alberti notes in Book III "tap around like blind men on unknown paths and exits."[29]

The instructor, whether Baptista or the Prince, is not a universal man, but a particular being of extraordinary capacity and thus by no means representative of mankind. His being is specifically aimed towards his pedagogical obligations --from ontological ideal, to epistemological interaction with the world. His gift to society is the opening up of his own being, cunning yet virtuous, so that the process of transformation can be inaugurated. Their goal, as Alberti asserts in De commodis, is to place others on his own path towards "an honorable and happy life very much similar to that of the gods (deorum persimilem)."[30]

This can be accomplished because Alberti's "few," like the Prince, or Baptista, himself "a mortal and happy god,"[31]

have a "talent and intellect that is almost divine".[32] "This intellect, this knowledge and reason and memory, all of it so infinite and immortal, where does it come from if not from him who is infinite and immortal?"[33] In Momus Alberti explains again.

> Without doubt, we understand how all things that are rare have a sense of divinity about them in that they are considered as unique and exquisitely singular, and sharply distinguished from the density of the multitude. [Momus] [34]

"Because of their excellence of talent that distinguishes them from the mob, ... we are instructed to call them divine and admire and honor them as gods."[35] However, as we have seen, the demi-gods are not vainglorious idols, for they must always be useful to their fellow men. This is true not only of Baptista, but even of St. Potiti, "deo simillimum," who gives to the people "things useful and commodious."[36]

In one of Alberti's most brilliant pieces in Intercoenales I, entitled Fate and Fortune, he describes a "demigod" saving men in their plight. The piece, almost Dantesque, describes a dreamer (Alberti) standing on a mountain looking down on the circular River of Life that girdles it. Existence in this River is precarious and endangered on many levels. A shade, speaking to the dreamer about the difficulty of negotiating one's survival in this River, draws attention to a group standing apart from the multitude struggling either on inflated bladders, overloaded ships, or even by swimming unaided. The group of demigods, standing to one

side, are "diis persimiles," and Alberti explicitly claims to "see himself" among them. They are engaged in the "admirable enterprise of constructing rafts and other aids" to help the multitude negotiate the toilsome River of Life. Their task is to provide the lifesaving rafts of The Good Arts.

> SHADES: But now, offer supreme honor to those you see there set apart from the multitude.
>
> Looking in all directions, I said: "In truth, I see no one who is separated from the multitude."
>
> And the shades: "How can you miss those who with wings on their feet, fly with such agility and rapidity over the waves?"
>
> Then I said: "I see but one; but why should I do homage to him? What have these done?"
>
> Answered the shades: Does it seem to you that those have little merit, who --simple and uncorrupted-- are considered by men to be divine? Their wings represent truth and simplicity, and their winged sandals signify contempt for transitory things. Justly, therefore, are they considered divine, not only because of their divine endowments, but also because they were the first to construct the boards that you see floating on the river. Those boards, upon which they carved the title GOOD ARTS, are a great help to those who are swimming.
>
> Those others similar to the gods, but who nevertheless do not entirely emerge from the waters because, though they have their wings whole, they lack winged sandals, are demigods, and they are most deserving of being honored, and are to be venerated as being immediately below the gods. It is their merit to have enlarged the boards by adding pieces of flotsam to them. Further they engage in the admirable enterprise of collecting the boards from the reefs and the beaches, in order to construct new ones and to proffer these works to those who still swim in midstream.
>
> Render, O mortal, honor to these. Render them the thanks that they are due for having offered excellent help with these boards to those negotiating the toilsome River of life."

> This is what I saw and heard in my sleep; and I seemed, in a marvelous way to have somehow managed to be numbered among the winged gods. [Fatum et Fortuna] [37]

The wings, which represent truth and simplicity, are necessary attributes of the demigods so that the spirit can fly hither and thither on the turbulent River to bring help to the drowning. And, if we recall that the eye, as Alberti states in De re aedificatoria, represents the divine, then Alberti's famous symbol of himself, the winged eye,[38] takes on its proper meaning. It symbolizes his own transcendent image, a demi-god at the service of society.

VI

THE MYTH OF REJUVENATION

Alberti's categories of quasi-divine instructors are not meant to be interpreted as individuals, but as metaphors for society's regenerative instinct.

It may seem now that Baptista's-and the Prince's power derives from an individualistic and voluntaristic will. They seem to follow the Ciceronian model of the ideal orator, who stands head and shoulders above the rest. Indeed, this theme of the powerful individualized will has been stressed by many scholars as being typical of Renaissance Humanism.[1] However, it is here argued that Alberti's characters are no proof of a Renaissance "rediscovery" of the individual. Baptista, the Prince, as well as the other quasi-autobiographic personae, do not represent an ideal individual. On the contrary, they are semiotic devices which stand in for something more akin to the opposite, namely, society's rejuvenative instinct. They hover anonymously over the circular River of Life, which is itself an ideogram for cultural continuity. Rather than exemplify the ideal "universal" man, they are artificial constructs, not wholly believable, but from Alberti's point of

view necessary to identify, and give identity to, the dynamic multiplicity needed for cultural viability.

The kindling and preservation of the regenerative instinct was for Alberti the specific task of Humanism. (This was the reason Alberti was critical of many of his fellow Humanists, who, as we shall see later, had lost sight of the ultimate purpose.) "Humanism," however, must be seen in Alberti's own terms. These are best spelled out in Picture from Intercoenales II, where he describes the image of a goddess, Mother Humanism, who, like Baptista, is assembled from various components.

> On the panel was the marvelous image of a woman with many different faces coming together on one neck: old, young, sad, happy, joyous, serious, humorous and so forth. Similarly, the image had many hands extending from the shoulders. One hand held a quill, another held a lyre, another a symmetrically shaped gemstone, another held a remarkably worked-out painting, another hand carried instruments used by mathematicians, and still another held books. Above this picture was the title Mother Humanism. [Picture] [2]

Baptista is Humanism incarnate. A versatile psyche, portrayed by the numerous faces, an author symbolized by the pen, a Promethian bringer of the divine light symbolized in the gem,[3] a creator of beauty symbolized by the carefully crafted painting, an organizer of man's activities symbolized by mathematical instruments, and finally a transmittor of texts. The task of the "Humanist," as of all of Albertian authors --with the exception of Libripetta-- is to insure

that these things do not fall into the "Valley of Forgotten Things."

The "Humanist" author must begin the process of regeneration outside of society. He must start in a purified ground, in nature. In Theogenius, Alberti describes the intimate parallels between the peaceful and wholesome state of nature and the productive state of the writer. The author Theogenius "(un umanissimo vecchio)" composes his treatises in the blissful solitude of a forest on a hill above Florence, in the vicinity of a spring that itself yearns to greet Theogenius with his reflection so that the scholar can better meditate in the presence of his image. The author, as we must remember, must always transcend the Narcissistic image.

> THEOGENIUS: Here columns erected by nature are the steep trees that you can see. There, above us, are the delightful beeches and firs whose shadow cover us from the sun. All around wherever you turn your eye, you will see thousands of reflected colors of various flowers shining among the green grass and the shadows, surpassing the brilliance and the light of the sky,.... And here close by is this silver and pure spring, witness and arbiter in part of my studies, which always smiles at me and all that is inside it flows around me, caressing and hiding at times among the foliage of these very fresh and charming grasses, and at times with its exalted waves it raises itself and babbling sweetly it bends towards me and greets me and at other times it shows its tranquil and joyful waters to my eyes, anxiously waiting for me to look at my image (specchi) reflected in it and in so doing contemplate myself. [Theogenius] [4]

Theoretically, just as Nature finds its perfect resonance in Theogenius, Theogenius' studies, "witnessed and

arbitered" by the spring should find their resonance in society. The aim of the Albertian author is unmistakably to establish a "naturale società e vera religione"[5] in which the author stands between and links the benevolent and useful aspects of nature with society's regenerative instinct by means of his text.

In the present state of affairs, however, so Alberti holds in the Apollo story, society is not able to understand the function of the mirror. Society has transgressed the boundaries of natural law. "Nature is firm and constant; nothing escapes her order; nothing can transgress her laws,"[6] he argues in Theogenius nothing, that is, except disorderly man.

> THEOGENIUS: A vicious and perverse mind is much more harmful and pestiferous than any abominable animal, because animals are pacific by nature and fight only for defense. Only when provoked do they attack with the weapons given them by nature: claws, horns, teeth, and similar things. But iniquitous mankind is pleased by his own malignity, and whether upset or not using weapons in endless ways, he loves ruin and death. Nature offered as a divine gift to mortals the capacity to speak, which should have been used together with benevolence and sweet peace, but is used by the wicked men in order to perturb any pleasant union and consolidated grace..... Man is not content with the whole circumference of the world. He plows across the seas beyond the world, he wants to go under water, and fly above the earth; he enters into the mountains ransacking everything. Animals are satisfied with their food,... but there is nothing as bestial, restless and impatient as man. [Theogenius] [7]

To cure a non-natural society, Baptista, and the other Albertian authors, must set an example by demonstrating the possibility of self-cure, having found their simulative

transformation in the mirror of nature. The Albertian author has above all to protect himself, for in so doing he protects society.

> THEOGENIUS: In my case, every simple thing of mine is within me and cannot be taken away. Mine and with me are the knowledge of writing, together with the Good Arts, and the care and love of virtue and excellent things for a good and happy life. Neither adverse things nor any hard or impetuous things can take these things away from me.[8]

In so far as his power derives directly from Nature without intermediary, the "Humanist" is also synonymous with it and subject to its turbulence, for Nature is herself not always benevolent. She has two sides. This is eloquently portrayed in a Psalm Alberti wrote, a segment of which demonstrates the direct parallels between nature's distemper and the author's anguish.

Lord, may you not accuse me in your wrath, nor may you
seize me in your anger.
Terrible is the flame amidst the crops of the field,
terrible is the lake rushing down from the high
cliff.
Terrible is the sea stirred up by the storm. Terrible
are the hail storms and whirl winds in the air.
Terrible is the lightning separating the clouds with
a clap of thunder, terrible is the shaking lofty
oak tree.
When the mountains resounding tremble under one's feet
and frightful, they gape in amazement at the vast
vault of heaven.
Then, when I tremble, my mouth burns with flames and
the tears in my eyes flow down from deep in my heart.
A violent storm of cares rages in my breast, fierce
whirlwinds of grief assault my spirit. [Psalmi
precationum: secundus] [9]

Being locus of the struggles of society as well as of nature Baptista cannot insulate himself from their respective

disturbances, but experiences them in his being. He exposes the turbulence of both for others to see much as a diagnostic tool. The Albertian Humanist can only be effective if he can insulate himself, both physically and spiritually, in a setting where nature and society provide overlapping realms of tranquility.

Here is the source of Alberti's voluntarism. Those who represent the rejuvenative spirit must learn to protect themselves and delete from society and from nature all elements of turbulence. As such the "Humanist" reenacts the Promethean struggle to hand over to man nature's beneficial powers. Prometheus is an important figure in Alberti's thought, as we find him described in Profugiorum.

> AGNOLO: Prometheus continued to complain and he said, "Yet I wanted that the mortals no longer had to die. I imposed many hopes and blindnesses on them, and at the same time I joined living passions to celestial passions." At this point the Ocean, great among the gods, answered. "You Prometheus, forget your memorable deeds. Only when the sky serves new masters will it take on new [and better] customs. So curb your language and provocations. The fury that you feel so strongly will become your defeat; it inflames you and you will die in humble words. Thus it will be useful to you to look frequently less wise and cultured than you are." [Profugiorum] [10]

Alberti's version of the Promethean myth spells out that Alberti does not permit the transcendent hero to claim credit for his deed. His anonymity is his fate. Therefore, to use the word 'individual' in reference to Albertian characters is to risk misunderstanding. The struggle of Alberti's

composite Humanist allegorizes society's own internal struggle for its survival.

With Baptista, and the other "Alberti" personae, whom Baptista subsumes, such as Leopis and Philoponius, Alberti attempts to define this struggle and in the process create a new mythological center of society. Society had corrupted its antiquated mythological reservoir, as it were, and a new and cleansed mirror had to be held up to it where once again the difference between good end evil can be distinguished.

Alberti's cultural myth is not aimed at rooting out turbulence and evil, but only at restoring the natural regenerative element, and bringing the drama of restoration into the open. However, Baptista must first document society's defective imaginative power. He not only attempts to make society conscious of values and ideals, but also expresses, by way of analogy to his own ontological definition, the structures, elements, balances, and tensions that contribute to society's functioning.

The mythic quality of Baptista is enhanced by his lack of an abodal identity. He is rendered as a perennial outsider, one without roots in society, (i.e. without contamination).

> AGNOLO: They say: Love your country, love your family and give them as much good as they want. But they also say that the country of the human being is the whole world, and that the wise man, where ever he is, will make that place as his own; he won't escape his country, but he will adopt another one and he will be a lot better off there where he

> will not receive injury and where he can live modestly. Thus they praise that old saying of Teucer, a well-known and prominent man; he said that his country was there where he felt well. [Profugiorum] [11]

The Albertian Humanist must be an exile, for he enters society Promethean-like from the domain of Nature, from where he brings only Nature's benevolent and useful forces. Even after his entry into society he remains an outsider, an internal exile in the evil society. If he does not live outside of society, like Theogenius, exiled and living in the forest above Florence, but lives inside of society, then he must become a vagabond, as Alberti argues satirically in Momus. The vagabond, "living in the theaters, loggias, and public constructions of all type,"[12] can retain a last vestige of freedom. It is a fate not so much forced upon the "Humanist," as an intellectual stance, an "art" in its own right. The life of Momus is inverse, yet identical to, that of Baptista, the painter and geometrician.

> There is this difference [between the art of geometry and the art of vagabonding]. The future geometrician needs an instructor; the art of vagabonding however, needs no education. The other arts and disciplines require a period of study, fatiguing study, and the active exercise of rules well co-ordinated with application. Furthermore, they demand means and instruments of all types, which are not needed in this art.... The vagabond does not have to do anything except act according to his own convenience. He can laugh, accuse, rebuke at will, all according to his talent, without any consequences.... He can do what he wants without having his words and actions censured. Under the reign of evil princes, others escape and flee into exile, while you animate the very fortress of the tyrant. [Momus] [13]

Theogenius is one of those who were forced into exile. Those who wish to learn from him must search him out in the forest. Baptista is an exile returned. He is the model "Humanist" functioning within society's turbulence. Momo is perhaps what Baptista might become in old age. Living in society, a public vagrant, he understands that his survival is dependent on taking the exaggerations of an unnatural society to their logical extreme.

Thus despite the fact that Theogenius, Baptista, and Momo embody their own negation, they remain, each in their own way, examples of those "uomini prestantissimi e rari" resiliently "emerging from life with an undefeated and untroubled soul,"[14] as they must, in order to focus and fix in their being society's potential to survive.

VII

MOMO AND THE "FINAL SHRIEK"

The transcendent few are ordering elements that are meant to help in the regulation of an unruly world. The success of their task, however, is by no means guaranteed. Just as the "Humanist" for Alberti is a composite of society's seminal essences, society, as it exists in the continual present, is the negation of that potential. History is the tiresome repetition of this perennial struggle.

Because of their larger purpose, Alberti's "few," the functionaries in the myth of rejuvenation, the writers, princes, instructors, and saints, should become the harbingers of society's self-awareness. Clearly, however, the ability of the "few" to lead society is not guaranteed. The potential failure of the "Humanist" endeavor is the eschatological cloud that hangs ominously over everything.

Since they offer themselves for public scrutiny, they are never allowed to engage in what could be interpreted as arbitrary actions. "The will of those who are watched by the many is never free."[1] However, their mental bearing, which reflects their superior status, ironically tends to incite the multitude to envy. "One should not be surprised," Alberti

writes, "if those people who shine with virtue incite in the soul of others envy."[2]

> False ones, detractors, morally ambiguous ones, and liars, the genus of infamy and those sacrelegious and great robbers, he [Baptista] used to say, ought to be punished because they destroy truth, reason, and anything very holy and rare. [Vita] [3]

The mob, which epitomizes society's self-destructive urge, turns against all that is "holy and rare." However, under ideal conditions, the multitude would recognize itself as the family through which the actions of the "few" reverberate clearly and beneficially. In De Iciarchia, Alberti describes such a hopeful scenario. Here the multitude is not envious, but works toward the common good under the leadership of the Prince. Baptista explains that the masses are to imagine themselves as members of a "blissful" family.

> BAPTISTA: ...I will explain that moderation of life is necessary, for one interacts with the multitude as with other private citizens, as among relatives and family members, where everyone of us becomes important and develops to an excellence the capacity which was put inside him, and not by fortune; nothing more can one wish than that together with the whole family all will be honored and very blissful. [De Iciarchia] [4]

This idealistic vision that Baptista here holds out for a fruitful interaction between the few and the masses is more wishful thinking than reality. In practice this state of affairs is beyond hope. The masses, as we have seen in Virtus are not only ruled by Fortuna, but, as Alberti described in the following allegorical tale, from Intercoenales I, by

Pluto, the ruler of sloth and money. Even Hercules is powerless against Pluto's seditious influence.

> When Hercules died and ascended to heaven, he is said to have greeted warmly all the gods that great Jove sent to meet him except Pluto, god of wealth. When Pluto ran up with the rest to greet the newcomer, Hercules drove him away with threatening looks and curses as though he were some obscene and filthy vagabond. When asked why he had done this, Hercules replied that he could not abide Pluto's presence in the divine company because on earth he had never seen the god favor any but the laziest and most slothful men. It is said, however, that Pluto only smiled and advised Hercules to recall that he [Pluto] and all the other gods owed their temples and golden honors especially to the followers of Pluto. [Pluto] [5]

The double forces of Fortuna and Pluto whip the multitude into a fury of uncontrolled vacillations. This turbulence in the souls and minds of the masses stands in the way of their self-becoming and must be addressed first. Unless the "multitude learns moderation from the superiori," so Alberti argues in De Iciarchia, "it will be impossible to live a life without becoming dissolute and perturbed."[6]

In a fable from Intercoenales I, Alberti describes how an aberrant individualist, who, though he gained the correct insight into the mechanics of his fate, brought great harm onto himself by attempting to interfere with the higher logic.

> A certain rooster, who was shut up among other poultry in a barnyard, refused the proffered feed and morsels and, therefore, lay exhausted by hunger and sadness. His fellows asked him why he chose to starve himself amid such an abundance of food. The rooster replied that this was all done according to a prudent plan. For he declared that those who indulged in such pleasures were mad for a variety of

> reasons, but especially because they were all too ignorant of how they hastened their own death and destruction. It was clear, he said, that food was being provided generously only so that the fattened bird could be slaughtered.
>
> In time it happened that the owner of the farm noticed that this rooster was, as I said, wasting away from hunger and weakness. The owner was afraid that it suffered from some contagious disease and might bring harm to the other fowl. And so he cast the invalid cock out among the sedges and brambles. When a hungry wolf came along and started to devour him, it is said that the cock lamented his fate and angrily blamed himself for his misfortune... The cock is said to have wished that he had made a meal for some man rather than for this ugly, raving beast that had happened by. [Gallus] [7]

The greatest tragedy is that the masses, not at peace with themselves, will unknowingly and arbitrarily destroy the advantages, however modest, that the superiori can give them. In a fable called Templum, from Intercoenales II, Alberti maintains his thesis that the mob, ignorant, jealous, impetuous, and all too clever, can easily bring down the edifice of justice and reason which the transcendent try so hard to set up and maintain in their struggle for cultural continuity. The author relates that there was once a glorious temple, "which would have lasted to this day had not a remarkable and unheard of event caused it to fall into ruin."[8] The foundation stones decided to rise up in revolution because they felt that they had been unjustly exploited, causing the destruction of the temple. However, once the temple lay in ruins, the architects decided to burn the foundation stones into lime, rather than reuse them, since

they assumed the stones to be unworthy of supporting the weight of a noble structure.

Already in St. Potiti, Alberti stresses that "the raw multitude does not know how to make great things,"[9] because, as he affirms in De commodis, "a solid and clear virtue will not be found among the opinion of the mob."[10] This defect, which lay at the base of both St. Potiti's martyrdom as well the destruction of the temple, will eventually result in the destruction of all princely and noble endeavors. In conformance with Alberti's conviction of the everpresence of this defect, "He [Baptista] predicted the insurrections against the princes in many cities."[11]

The arbitrariness of loss is one of the central themes of Alberti's writings. In Theogenius, Alberti lists many illustrious men who have fallen victim to the populace.

> THEOGENIUS: Alcibiades, who was rich, fortunate, and beloved, and who had an almost divine mind was in every praise prince of his citizens. However, after having ennobled his fatherland with his virtue and victories, he died in exile, losing all his possessions, and in poverty, because the masses always disliked him, since he was not similar to them in life and customs. [Theogenius] [12]

The masses, described as bestial, will always assert themselves in the final analysis. As, Alberti reafirms in Profugiorum, "The evil of the masses always wins."[13]

In Momus, written at the same time as De re aedificatoria, the theme of arbitrary destruction is repeated in a brilliant allegorical tale. In one of several gripping,

nightmarish stories, Alberti describes the appearance of a ship on the river Styx. The ship, we are told, represents the "state."[14] When it lands, the sailors decide to create a new king. After placing themselves around a pool of water, a rat is thrown in the pool and the person toward whom the rat swims is elected king. However, the captain refuses to accept the new ruler and is tortured and murdered. The spiteful sailors set sail jubilantly.

The product of man's labors is also subjected to a host of uncontrollable forces. As Alberti explains in De re aedificatoria, the architect has to face "the violence and impetuousness of nature," "the turbulence of the waters," "the infestation of vermin," not to mention "the negligence of man."[15] History, for Alberti, is the continual and unending repetition of this struggle in its numerous variations.

The themes of this struggle are condensed in the scenario Picture of Intercoenales II. Alberti describes an Indian temple in which, on the two opposite sides, are to be found a series of twenty paintings with the following titles.[16]

Invidia Mater	Humanitas Mater
Calumnia	Beneficentia
Indignatia	Benivolentia
Inimicitia	Pax
Miseria	Felicitas
Calamitas	Immortalitas
Iniuria	Laus
Vindicta	Cura Virtutis
Contentio	Securitatas Animi
Ambitio Mater	Modestia Mater

Alberti's social critique represents more than just a reiteration of medieval contrasts of good and evil. There is a matter of proportion. The group on the left represents for him the reality of society. They are the commonplaces of social interaction, whereas the concepts on the right are not the commonplaces they should be. They are unrealizable.

For Alberti, the transcendent few, who are virtuous, flexible, farsighted, and strong willed, inhabit a sparsely populated realm. They look down on the real world which is horrendous and disordered. Yet, Alberti was not an elitist; the masses are not only to blame. Society is also destabilized by the evil of defective rulers, as is described in this Psalm in which he criticizes such an unnamed prince.

Petulant mouth and the envy of a hard eye, and a forehead filthy with all baseness.
You have a breast crammed with vice, an impious mind, and a perverse talent and a wild spirit.
Why is there harm in your heart, betrayal, wickedness, crime, always pretense and falsehood.
Are you not sorry, entirely and completely impure, to rouse the hatred of the just against yourself?
May the spices of the Arabs become an offensive odor to you.
May the Hyblean honey taste like bitter ashes.
May the jewels on your fingers grow black and may the lillies in your palm become black.
Truly, may your field not grow green and may bitter fruit fall in your gardens.
May your gold rot into dust and may all you endeavors be in vain. [Psalmi precationum - quintus] 17

Confusion, ugliness, egoism, and hatred pervade everything. Society, lacking a vision of its rejuvenative instinct becomes, as is described in Defunctus, a "spectacle of

frenzy," (furiam spectaculis),[18] or, as in Somnium, a stagnating river and an inescapable morass. Libripeta, the worldly cynic has a vision of this world, to which he was transported by some magic spell.

> LIBRIPETA: Instead of waves [in the river of life], there flowed human faces, and among these there were some who were pale, sad, sick, and others, cheerful, pleased, and colorful. Yet others were wrinkled and emaciated; some were fat, puffed up, while others had prominent and deformed eyes, nose, mouth, teeth, hair, chin; It was a vision of horror, stupefaction and monstrosity!... Beyond the river are useless votive offerings and then the river of tears. Beyond that grasslands, thick with the hair of women, the beards of men, the fur of animals, and even lion's manes grew up. In fact, you could see nothing in this field other than hair of all sort...and all full of voracious lice. [Somnium] [19]

As he travels from place to place, Libripeta comes to a deeper understanding of the total depravity and hopelessness of the human psyche. In the end, finding himself pursued by a cloud of voracious lice, he escapes through the sewers of the city, wiser, but no longer productive.

The depiction of the world as a type of nauseous hell on earth was nothing new. In fact, the notion of contemptus mundi was a standard medieval intellectual commonplace.[20] However, Alberti's contrast between good and evil is carried to a higher, more feverish pitch.

The crisis is best and most vividly portrayed in Momus, Alberti's most cynical, surreal, and diabolic work. The specter of catastrophe that looms over society, Alberti argues, has taken on such proportions that though the "few"

have always been victimized, now they must willingly assume the consequences of their superiority. As we have seen, they must become vagabonds, inverting all the rationally established principles of cultural preservation.

The "few" realize that their own destruction could represent a last effort on behalf of society. They must offer themselves over to the turbulence of life even at the risk of their own extinction. In Momus, Alberti describes just such a martyrdom. He turns an image, as usual an image of himself, incarnated once again as a demigod, into a martyr with the self-imposed mission to save the world.

The world of Momus is described as beyond all hope whatsoever. "Mankind is nature's way of making a joke (ludos)."[21] All human endeavor is in vain because by now divine order itself has degenerated into chaos. With messianic urgency, Momo warns the gods of impending disaster. As we may recall from Chapter I, he delivers to Olympus a manuscript (tabella) that outlines a new utopian image of human existence in which the human state and the divine state once again parallel each other and even share common values. The manuscript, handed to Jove, is thrown in with other rotting books and only discovered at the end of time when Jove cleans up his library in a belated attempt at self-improvement.

Momo, the disillusioned author, now a prophet of doom, probes the depth of his simulative capacities. He pretends to adapt himself to existing circumstances to draw out advan-

tages and succeed in presenting his case. As long as he simulates the debased gods he is honored and respected. However, eventually his rage bursts forth and he accuses the gods of leading a wicked life and of abandoning mankind. On account of his Promethean efforts on behalf of the world, Momus is attacked, castrated, humiliated and exiled from Olympus. The "impulsive and unpredictable multitude" (of Gods!) throws him into the ocean and exiles him for eternity.[22] "The plan to construct a new world" (novum quaerebamus exaedificare mundum) for both gods and man dies with Momus' exile.[23]

But Alberti does not stop here, for just as in most of his other works he takes on various forms, not just that of Momo. In particular there is an unnamed "painter," (Baptista?) who is a commentator on the earthly life. This unnamed painter appears in other writings too; he already "mediates" a tale in St. Potiti where he describes the characteristics of the devil; in De commodis he paints the ugly and debased individuals who pretend to call themselves writers.[24] In Momus, this painter steps forward once again, depicting a world of despair and perversion. In his tale, perhaps one of the most unusual pieces of early Renaissance writing, Alberti describes how Charon, the helmsman of the river Styx, recounts the tale related by this "painter" about the creation of man.[25]

In this mock creation myth, adapted from the commonplace concept of Prometheus as the sculptor of man's form,[26] Charon describes how the painter fashioned men and women out of mud and shaped them in molds of copper. The story omits the word God and obliquely slides into the assumption that it was the "painter" who, god-like, fabricated these individuals. After having shaped his newly-created beings, the painter makes adjustments on them, taking away a little mud here and adding a little mud there, which as we recall, is the proscribed method of artistic production.

Once completed, the men and women were directed to the habitat of the painter, significantly enough, "on the top of a mountain," a place, so they were told, where they will find all "good things in abundance." They are exhorted to ascend directly and speedily to the top.[27] (In De pictura the comprehension of the rule of perspective is also "direct and simple," that is for the "intelligent minds."[28])

The path to the land of abundant good was described by the painter as only posing initial difficulties (an argument also found in De pictura.[29]) There was no good reason for disobedience, yet, men, because of their stupidity and freedom in the face of choices, do not let themselves easily be guided by reason. Some broke away, and in their foolishness transformed themselves into animals, "a prerogative that had been permitted them by their creator." Many others, led on by curiosity, explored secondary paths against specific warn-

ings, only to get lost in the precipitous wilderness of brambles and thorns, these being commonplace metaphors for the turbulence of society. In imitative response to the roughness of these places, they turned into various types of monsters. (In De pictura, Alberti relates, as we may recall, how individuals who do not heed his instructions will tap around among unknown paths like blind men and get lost.)

When these violently transfigured men eventually tried to rejoin the others on the main path they were rejected and turned away on account of their ugliness, an ugliness which they had acquired by simulation on the ugly side-paths. They then constructed masks of a mud similar to the material used originally, so that with training, they could learn to camouflage themselves and re-enter unrecognized on the direct path. (Among these individuals Alberti clearly numbers the "learned", for whom, as we shall see in a following chapter, he holds little respect.) Once the masked individuals mingled with the others it became difficult to tell the true faces from the false ones, the "fictiones," as Alberti calls them. Only those who look with great attention at the eye sockets could discern the monstrous appearance behind. Alberti finishes the tale by relating how, only in crossing the river Styx, do the masks dissolve and the true countenances appear.

There are other stories in Momus equally depressing, but these alone should suffice to convey the intensity of the struggle the transcendent few have to face. The gods and the

multitude reflect and reinforce each other's evil and together outflank the last vestige of good, the demigods, who are caught in the middle. Momo struggles to no avail, and the painter can only look on with disbelief. Only with difficulty, can even he discern the good from the bad.

Alberti's aesthetics, if read against the background of Momus, is an attempt to prod society to act on its own accord; it must test its own potential for salvation. However, instruction no longer has any value, and the ability of men to simulate the deities is a long lost art, --nor are the gods even worthy of simulation. In contrast to Dante, Alberti creates a scenario of total hopelessness. There is no choice between heaven and hell, but at best a noble and self-effacing attempt by the few to elevate themselves into a quasi anagogic state to serve as a guide and model for those who will listen. The irony, however, lies in the circumstance that they have lost direct leverage, and can only work by indirect means, either as exile or as vagabond.

Thus, the transcendent, whether they be the prophetic Momo, the perceptive painter, or the enlightened Prince are, much like the eulogized Baptista of the Vita anonyma, not destined to survive. The prince finds his doom in a senseless revolt, "similar to the sun terminated by clouds."[30] Momo is emasculated and chained to the ocean, his visionary manuscript ignored; the painter can relate his wisdom only after

death to men who, passing over the river Styx and stripped of their masks, can be confronted with the truth.

The conviction that failure is unavoidable is essential to Alberti's literary, ethical and cultural theory. Those responsible for society's regenerative instinct are always "surrounded by so many enemies."[31] All was foreshadowed in the defeat of Virtue, "whose allies beat a hasty retreat,... leaving her "raped and abandoned in the mud."[32] Even nature, on whom everything depends, and whose calling Baptista responded to, has become weary. "Nature, mistress of all things, has grown old and weary, and no longer produces intellects, any more than giants, on the vast and wonderful scale such as she did in what one might call her youthful and more glorious days."[33]

Virtue, "tired Virtue," as Alberti eloquently laments in the following poem is on the verge of annihilation. All we can expect is a "final shriek." Virtue, because of her defenselessness, requires restraint, but restraint is misunderstood in the modern age as weakness. And so the "I" of social consciousness, exemplified in the virtuous and talented, is inevitably, and paradoxically, led down a path of suffering to its own destruction.

> If I suffer, no one should be surprised,
> Because one wants what one likes.
> I don't know when the soul, lost among so
> Many perils, will have any peace.
>
> Miserable that I am! On what should
> My vain hope, weak and false, hang?

I cannot dislike the one who does this to me.
Love, what does one do? Why don't you advise me?

Time would be good to advance one's course,
But since tired virtue is already failing,
I can no longer trust either of them.

But if restraint extends to compassion,
I believe that help will come in time.
If not, you will soon hear the final shriek. 34

- PART II -

Full-length portrait, by Alberti, of himself holding a book, and pointing to his name.

- Rome, Biblioteca Nazionale: Cod. 738, Victor Emanuel Bequest -

VIII

THE ARTIST, THE WRITER, AND THE PUBLIC

We now turn away from the figures and categories that constitute the armature of Alberti's cultural theory to focus on the literary task itself. Alberti drew a clear distinction between literary and artistic production. I will show that Alberti was not trying to elevate the fine arts in Humanist culture. On the contrary, the Albertian artist, unlike the Albertian writer, is not defined as a "Humanist," at least not in Alberti's understanding of that term. The Albertian "Humanist" is the outcome of a fragmented world. He himself suffers under the specter of disintegration. The Albertian artist, in contrast, is designed to function in a hypothetically intact world.

Leopis, Peniplusius, Baptista, Momo, Genipatro, and Neofrono are all authors, that is Albertian authors. They share certain telltale characteristics. They are unaffected by evil, their writings are a type of natural communication, and their efforts are commissioned not by man but by nature, which presses them into service for the benefit of all mankind. The sketch of Alberti (see previous page), which seems to have been done by himself, reveals most of these characteristics. This drawing is, in essence, the paradigm of the authorial pose. We see Alberti with a text in his left hand, while his right hand points to his name. On his cloak,

above his right knee, appears the symbol of the demigod, the winged eye. He is standing "in nature," in a meadow next to a spring.

The "author," as represented in this sketch, is the ideal end result of all Albertian authorial versions. From among these, Genipatro represents the father figure, Leopis and Peniplusius, his offspring, and Baptista and Momo, the new messengers of salvation or damnation, with Theogenius in between. A healthy society mirrored in nature's benevolence would heed and respect the writings of the Albertian authors, and recognize their regenerative value. It would give back, like nature "not in kind, but in a higher measure."[1]

The author reliquishes himself totally to society: his entire life and fortune ("intera fortuna") depends on whether society values and heeds his services. Identical with society's more noble aspirations and highest goals, the writer should enjoy the prestige and honor that is granted to him "without hesitation." After all, it is he who creates a new tradition of "great men" to replace the ineffective and antiquated one.

> What if, finally, outside of all tradition and beyond all ancient customs of famous men, somebody [referring to writers] could find a way of becoming equally rich by means of their own culture, that can verify itself only in those who have a fortune more satisfying, a knowledge more profound, an authority more decorated, and esteem among his friends more sought after and amplified by others, gifted by fluency of speech, ease of manner, talent, versatility, and a shrewdness well appreciated and accepted in the hearts and ears of men. So it should be with those writers, because the

> citizens without hesitation, entrust them with control over the entire fortune of their lives (intera fortune) and especially because society is disposed to give them numerous recompenses and advantages. However, very few indeed are to be those who attain this great height of renown. [De commodis] [2]

Alberti's definition of the author's task in society served, of course, to lay the groundwork for his own hoped-for effectiveness. Ironically, it is the defective society that pressures the author to assume and then define a formal, authorial pose. Consequently, the author has to submit to restrictions as to what type of communication would serve his purpose best. As a type of public official, he has to be cautious if he wishes to remain authoritative.

> PENIPLUSIUS: One's domestic and private thought and life should not be exposed to the censure of the masses. If this happens, you will find that no one's reputation is so true and solid that either casual talk or pointed criticism of detractors cannot largely destroy it. [Paupertas] [3]

Discretion is paramount to the Albertian author. "It is incredible how words can lead to the ruin and perdition of men," Alberti reminds himself in Theogenius."[4] In Profugiorum, Agnolo, Baptista's "father," who is himself an author, explains that one must learn cautiously to adapt oneself to the all-powerful multitude, and keep in mind its destructive tendency. One's sovereignty must remain hidden.

> AGNOLO: You can't show yourself to be free. Obey the power of the masses. For Euripides, the poet, the bad actions of the multitude appeared more powerful than fire itself, and more suitable for destroying and consuming things. And they say that the multitude is always undefeatable.... But how much and to whom it is necessary to surrender, necessity will teach you, and it always judges sur-

> render necessary if you do not want to perjure your position. [*Profugiorum*] [5]

The distinction between public and private writings, though not uncommon in literary practice, bears, in Alberti's case, special significance. A recently uncovered document actually refers to Alberti's writings as "*scripta publica vel privata*."[6] This difference deserves a closer study, for it gives away a pattern of thought that reveals how Alberti conceived and implemented his theory.

'Private' does not mean that the writings were diaristic or intimate statements, but that they were directed to a limited audience of respected friends and colleagues. Most of *Intercoenales I*, for example, is a private work: Alberti dedicated it to his friend Paolo Toscanelli, advising him to read it like "bitter emetics to relieve the sick... and to cure grave cares."[7] *Theogenius* is also a private work. "I wrote this book for me, and not for others, in order to console myself in my misfortune."[8] So too was *Philodoxeus fabula*.

> And so in sorrow at my misfortunes and at the bitterness of those whom all the nobles wished me to conciliate, I wrote this story as a kind of personal consolation. [*Commentarium*] [9]

De commodis, in contrast, is an example of a text conceived as a public work from the start. It was written "to win approval of the *litterati*."[10] Some of the *Intercoenali* were similarly conceived. One of them, significantly enough described as a type of treaty, a "pact," addressed to

Leonardo Arrentium, was written with the announcement that "I see no reason why I should keep silent rather than speak out with my writings."

> Although my Table Talk probably offends the ears of many, nevertheless, I see no reason why I should keep silent rather than speak out in this document (pacto). In this way, I aim to show to all the learned, and to you especially, Leonardo, since you are the leading literary figure of our age, that I am a dedicated writer and that for this reason you should strongly support me. [Prohemium ad Leonardo Arrentium] [11]

De pictura and De re aedificatoria are prime examples of Alberti "speaking out with writing." Della Famiglia, unlike the treatises, however, started as a private work, growning out of Intercoenales I dialogues like Pupillus. The book, in its original version, as Alberti himself admits, angered his relatives to the point that they plotted his murder.[12] In changing it into a public document, however, all animosity had to be deleted. As a further precaution, Alberti had the manuscript reviewed by Leonardo Dati, then head of the papal chancellery. In a fortunately preserved letter, Dati wrote that Alberti had been right to entrust him with the protection of his "good name and dignity."[13]

Living between the public and private realms, the writer is forced to maneuver cautiously. Philodoxeus, for example, had to be rewritten because "a friend published the piece against my will, which meant of course that the whole work was rendered absurd."[14] To prevent a such misunderstandings, Alberti claims that he was forced to burn some of his

Intercoenali "so as not to give my enemies the chance to criticize them."[15] The ones that he did publish, rather than burn, like Defunctus and Virtus, were published "against his better judgment."[16] This perhaps explains why he left many of his works unsigned.[17]

The political realities at the time, though restrictive, do not fully explain the division of Alberti's writings. Although some of his works might have been considered controversial, nothing he wrote was aggressively confrontational. Poggio Bracciolini and Coluccio Salutati, as is well known, both wrote letters and commentaries that were far more outspoken than anything Alberti ever wrote. Giangaleazzo Visconti once said that he "feared Salutati's letters more than a thousand horsemen."[18] Alberti's practice to distinguish between public and private discourse was unlikely to have been forced upon him by external circumstance, but must be viewed as integral to his method.

However, it should be emphasized that the real division of Alberti's thought does not lie so much in a formal differentiation between public and private writings, but in a distinction between two different types of exposition. One is concerned with the autobiographic journey of the "author" from birth to death, figuratively speaking, as studied in Part One. This journey is manifested in both public and private works depending on the circumstances. Della Famiglia, for example, is an important link in Alberti's ontological

explication, but so too is Theogenius, which because of its darker message, is perforce private.

Thus, when Alberti, in Della Famiglia, in a properly rationalistic and moralistic frame of mind, describes individuals as "pilots of reason" who have to act the part of experienced sailors,[19] he is not contradicting what he holds to be true in Fatum et Fortuna. Here, in this nightmare, the same metaphor of the mariner is employed. However, the pilot, facing "the unending perils associated with ships, the stupidities of the mob, and the upheavals of public life."[20] is no longer viewed as a master of his fate. He is bound on a course toward certain death in the treacherous river of life. These two texts, as we have already seen, are part of a larger dialectic that encompasses professed hope on the one hand and real disillusionment, on the other.

The other part of Alberti's literary theory concerns his own immersion into the role of author, that is, into the role of professed hope. This public stance and the writings that correspond to its literary ontology, are, as we have seen, termed pacti. His main task is to protect society from the danger of feeding on its own disillusionment. The author as instructor, guide, and example, must subject himself to restraint.

In a public work such as Picture from Intercoenales II, where Alberti describes two walls of paintings, one depicting negative forces and the other, positive ones, he points out

deliberately that he begins his description on the left wall in order to proceed toward the theme of hope on the right.

> And so, let us begin with the left wall, so that we do not conlude this table talk with a prophesy of doom. [Picture] [21]

In respect to the artist, the Albertian author must exercise his skill with special care. The artist, to fulfill his function, must be protected from the paralyzing insights, which are the author's burden. In other words, the artist must, under no circumstances, be allowed to absorb the suffering of society. For this reason, Alberti's own itinerary as a writer, conscious of the cultural crisis mirrored in his own autobiography, has to be kept out of sight.

As Alberti demonstrates in the following excerpt from Momus, he fully understands the implications of a divided discourse, in which one "feigns and yet does not seem to feign," and in which one has the "capacity to hide secret thoughts with wise artifice." Momo has just realized that open communication of his plans and intentions has compromised the effectiveness of his efforts.

> The line of behavior of those who are forced to live between the mob and the private affairs must be the following: never forget in the intimacy of your heart the received offenses, but do not demonstrate your resentment. Feign and yet do not feign; don't change your mind during an undertaking, but be attentively vigilous like a sentinel; search to understand what are the feelings, the inclinations, the thoughts, the tentativeness, the projects, the interests, the necessities, the effects, the hatreds, the willingness and the possibilities of others.... The essential principle is this one only, namely, that there is no feeling which one cannot cover with perfection under the

> appearance of honesty and innocence. **Adapting our words, we will brilliantly attain our image, and whatever particular externality of our persona, in a manner that seems to be similar to those who are believed to be beautiful and moderate** [my emphasis]. What a splendid thing it is to know how to hide the more secret thoughts with the wise artifice of colorful and deceptive fiction. [Momus] [22]

This expression of the "externality of our person in a manner that seems to be similar to those who are believed to be beautiful and moderate" is an essential feature of Alberti's public writings, especially his aesthetic treatises. The Albertian author uses this "externality" not to deceive, but, on the contrary, to preserve virtue whose very survival he holds in doubt. If the artist attained the same degree of insight into the human condition as the writer, the artist would be paralyzed into non-productivity.

Consequently, the writer must conceive a theory of art that permits the artist to create in a state of innocence, unaware of the dangers inherent in interaction with society, unaware of Libripeta's cloacarium prudentiam, as described in Somnium, and unaware of the masks and deceits as described in Momus. It is not the task of the writer to reveal to the artist society's hidden and not so hidden defects. "We are obliged to the architect for the stability, dignity, and glory of public things."[23]

The writer must hide that his own intellectual origins are rooted in exile and disillusionment, which are symptomatic of society's instability. Like grandfather

Benedetto Alberti, who was exiled to Rhodes, the writer recognizes in his suffering and outsider status the bitter springs that feed him.

> From my youth on I have been susceptible to a certain erroneous way of thinking that led me to suppose unwisely that I truly possessed the things that most men say a man can have. I used to say 'my lands,' 'my possessions,' 'my riches,' according to the common habit of speaking among men.... But now I have the feeling that this very body in which I am trapped is not really mine. [Divitiae] [24]

Momo, Peniplusius, and Baptista, having no material stake in society, hope that as disinterested outsiders their knowledge will be taken without suspicion. Thus, they can better disseminate their wisdom to those who remain on the inside. However, Benedetto's newly found skepticism is something that should not be communicated as part of the public "pact." Society is dependent on the civic goodwill of the patron, as represented by Benedetto before his conversion, so to speak, into an exile. Prior to the events leading up to his banishment "he was never discontent with his private fortune and was always one to defend public trust with the greatest vigilance and faith."[25] With the pre-exiled Benedetto in mind, Alberti, in De re aedificatoria, striking a hopeful authorial pose, writes: "Without your generous wealth, you would not be able to honor yourself, your family, your descendants, or your city."[26]

For the "public trust" to remain intact, the artist, like all good dependents, must not be allowed to overexcel. The duty of Baptista, who is unusual in that he is both

writer and artist, is not only to lead the artist away from skepticism, but also guarantee that the artist's training will be conducted in a manner that keeps him in blinders, so to speak. In particular, Baptista must caution the artist to ignore the seditious whisperings of the philosophers. Though Alberti himself is proud of his philosophical training,[27] he tells the painter to "leave aside the disputes of the philosophers."[28] In De re aedificatoria, we encounter the same admonition. "I shall not discuss here those philosophical questions."[29]

Furthermore, Alberti places limits on the development of the artist's critical faculties. Whereas the father and the prince are continually advised to read, the one and only book the architect is given to study, apart from De re aedificatoria itself, is De pictura. The architect should, of course, study geometry, mathematics, and a "little astronomy and oratory," but there is a noticeable sense of caution in Alberti's words.

> I do not expect the architect to be a Zeuxius in painting, nor a Nicomachus at numbers, nor an Archimedes in the drawing of lines and angles. It is enough if he knows the Elements of Painting, which I wrote, be adept in mathematical things... as is necessary for the measuring of weights, surfaces, and solids.... These arts, together with study and diligence may serve the architect to obtain favor and deliver his name down to posterity. [De re aedificatoria] [30]

There is good reason why Alberti does not want the architect to be an "Archimedes in drawing." Archimedes, as he appears in Virtus and Profugiorum, is one of the precocious

few who defended the goddess Virtue and is, in turn, defended by her. Archimedes, like the rest of Virtue's defenders, Cicero, Praxiteles and Polycletus, was not effective in Virtue's defense, and thus withdrew from the public domain. He is forced to live his obsession, like Theogenius, in egocentric absorption. Because of this withdrawal, as described in the rousing closing paragraph of Profugiorum, he is an unfit example for the artist who must function publicly. In Alberti's reverse sort of world, he has been promoted to outsider status. He must become oblivious to society's perdition in order to protect his now thankless identity with society's lost center of gravity. Note that Agnolo recounts the story as a paradigm of his own identity.

> AGNOLO: Marcello, nearing Syracuse, ordered his army, despite the slaughter of such a noble land, to save Archimedes, the mathematician.... They found Archimedes absorbed by geometrical things, which he was drawing on the floor of his house. He was so removed from his senses that even the din of the weapons, the groans of the injured citizens, and yells of the dying multitude, who were killed by fire and collapsing roofs of the temples, didn't move him at all. It seems a miracle that such a din, such a thick fog of smoke and dust, didn't distract him from the investigations and reasonings to which he was devoting himself.... [Similarly absorbed in my investigations] I heard nothing, saw nothing but myself: I was reasoning within myself. [Profugiorum] [31]

It is no wonder that Alberti never refers to his own architectural activity even in De re aedificatoria, where, given his autobiographical propensity, this would have seemed natural. Alberti's image of himself as a writer, "who hears nothing and sees nothing but himself," would have made it

implausible that he could also recognize himself simultaneously as an artist under the terms of his own definition. The author, living "in solitudine"[32] in mind and in reality, is an outside observer. As is explained in De commodis, the writer is "trapped in a perpetual prison (perpertuo carcere) of sheep skin."[33]. The writer, like Archimedes and the philosophers described by Agnolo, knows that ascetic isolation is inherent in his task.

> AGNOLO: If we have to speak about the lives and customs and establish the reason and manners of the good and praised life, let us discuss those many other people, and even the philosophers, who are happy with one wornout piece of clothing, with a study room that is like a putrid and despicable vase, living only on cauliflower, and rejecting all fragile and ephemeral things to such a point that they don't even want to take for themselves a bowl to eat from. [Profugiorum] [34]

The architect, legitimizing the powers of the establishment, whether they are moral or amoral, is better served if he does not fathom the depths of society's ambiguity. He can not leave society, even in his imagination. He must fuse the artifact into the public realm without friction, and without having to overcome internal obstacles.

Since collective criteria structure the work of the artist, the private thoughts of the artist become either secondary, as in the case of the painter, or irrelevant, as in the case of the architect. Along these lines, Baptista, speaking for the Prince in De Iciarchia, advises his nephews to temper their desire to excel if they want to be good

citizens. As all "sons," they are dependent on the benevolent guidance of the princely father and the "good people."

> BAPTISTA: Don't trust your talent more than the judgment of benevolent ones, relatives, or those more expert scholars in that which you are dealing, since with them rarely will it happen that you will regret it. It is not possible that the judgments of many good people could be fallacious. [De Iciarchia] [35]

The writer, of course, recognizes the fallacy. Benevolent ones don't exist, relatives are vindictive, expert scholars are fakes. He himself is not in the position of the benevolent one as he should be, for he has been exiled. Therefore, the advice, as far as the author is concerned, is deceptive. But, the artists, just as dependent sons, must function within the larger context of cultural continuity. The possibility of redemption some time in the future has to be held open.

Only Baptista, the writer/painter, can depict what the Albertian painter cannot paint, namely, society's path toward cultural destruction. Let us recall in the work Momus the "painter's" depiction of the mountain of lost souls. This painter is to be identified with Baptista, and not with the painter as artist pure and simple. Still, even here, responsibility to the public weal must prevail. In deference to his mission to lead the artist away from this horror, the painter/author can relate the story, as we may recall, only to Charon after his death.

In principle then, Baptista is not so much an artist in his own right, as a type of patron saint of artists. Alberti (i.e., in the authorial pose of Baptista), hopes the painters will include "his" portrait in their paintings.

> I would especially ask them [the painters] as a reward for my labors to paint my portrait in their paintings, and thereby proclaim to posterity that I was learned in this art and that they are mindful of and grateful for this favor. [De pictura] [36]

In public, Baptista is the optimistic sponsor/instructor of the artist. In the privacy of his study, he must do battle with the specter of Libripeta. Thus in relinquishing his public stance, and in returning to the solitude of his authorial origins, Baptista can turn to art only as a private meditation. He puts it to use to block out the sinister part of his psyche, a situation that the painter is unfamiliar with. The writer must deal with the night world and with the dream, Fatum et Fortuna and Somnium, for example. By means of these dreams he can gain access to the turbulent workings of society. Yet, these insights must be tempered by Baptista if he wants to remain convincing as an instructor. Whereas Momo renounces all commitment to the artist, seeing himself as an anti-artist artist, and whereas Theogenius is undecided between hope and death, Baptista embodies the image of a writer who can break the spell of disillusionment for a belated effort to restore the artist's central position in society. In his own internal battle against cynicism, Baptista employs art as a prophylactic, which, as is explained in Profugiorum,

works like wine, game, and sleep, and can be a temporary remedy for the anguishes of the soul.

> And once, such investigations being lacking, I built in my mind some very elaborate buildings, conceived with many different orders and numbers of pillars and with various capitals and strange bases. I connected to these a convenient and graceful framing with wooden floors. And with similar occupations I occupied myself until sleep overcame me. [Profugiorum] [37]

The artists, painters, architects, or sculptors, must not preoccupy themselves unncessarily with the shadowy side of human existence, because their product must simulate a better world. "We learn as time goes on," so Baptista (as instructor) informs the painter, "to hate work that is dark and horrid, and the more we learn, the more we attune our hands to grace and beauty." [38] Instead of art as an obsession of the exhausted mind, the artistic act is portrayed as a manifestation of the pleasures inherent in wakeful enjoyment of the good and happy life. Once again, the "I" is an authorial pose.

> Whenever I devote myself to painting for pleasure, which I very often do when I have leisure from other affairs, I persevere with such pleasure in finishing my work that I can hardly believe later on that three or four hours have gone by. [De pictura] [39]

The writer is given a small recompense. He is permitted to listen to the secret inner springs of meditation and fantasy; he is permitted to indulge in idiosyncratic games of thought. These are, however, forbidden fruit for the artist. The architect, in particular, should not undergo a painful

transposition from private to public creativity; no alchemically magical change of essence must take place to allow him to function for the public weal. Mental deliberation, metaphysical speculation, and insight into man's evil are anathema to his purpose. There is no need for him to transmute potentially rebellious thoughts into public expression.

Alberti's discourse of rational, artifactual production is a theoretical construct that is meant to counterbalance the vision of a perennially unstable society.[40] The writer can postulate a world in which the artist functions as if society were intact. Thus, Alberti's "aesthetics" are dependent on his definition of the author. With great skill, he must manufacture the reverse of the defective world.

Baptista's image of such an intact world is not necessarily an ideal or peaceful one, for the potential for regression exists at every turn. The architect and the painter, dependent on the goodwill of society, to whose needs they respond, could themselves become incapacitated, as Libripeta did, if they become conscious of the all-pervasiveness of evil. A certain limitation, so Alberti tells us, has its advantages in the pursuit of the good and happy life.

> AGNOLO: When you don't see and don't hear the many things that can distress you, you see enough when you discern good things from bad things, worthy things from unworthy things, and you hear enough when you hear yourself speaking of those things that are good for virtue and praise. The night has within itself its own pleasures. [Profugiorum] [41]

Intrinsically then, and quite contrary to the generally held opinion that Alberti invented the gentleman architect, Alberti views the ideal architect as a purposefully unevolved being, one who, like "Alberti," remains perennially young, and has to be kept in a naive state of hopefulness under the continual auspices of the father-prince. The pre-trauma Baptista, namely "Alberti," is the audience, so to speak, to whom De pictura is addressed. The artist, like Neophrono, never should undergo the trauma of social understanding, which means that though he is talented, virtuous, and innocent, he cannot become a a mortal god. He remains dependent on the father figure even when he matures. This latter stance is, however, not a weakness, but a theoretical postulate that itself is intended to strengthen the bonds of society. The architect does not have the versatile independent genius of the "Humanist" Baptista. If the Albertian architect and painter survive they will be just as responsible as Baptista for social continuity. One works from outside, the other from inside the system.

Finally, to demonstrate that the artist functions within a hypothetically intact society, Alberti demands that the artist communicate openly with society. In De re aedificatoria, Alberti proclaims that "if a man happens to think of anything new [in the arts], he likes to communicate and divulge it for the use of others, **as if coerced by nature** to do so..."[42] And because "there is no one who does not think it an honor to express his opinion on someone

else's work," the artist lives in a world potentially accessible to all, whether in criticism or in practice.[43] "You will not easily find anyone who does not earnestly desire to be accomplished in painting."[44] Since this principle of open communication is universally understood, "there is no need to fear that the judgments of censorious and envious critics can in any way detract from the merit of the painting." (!)[45] Thus, Alberti advocates what he himself skillfully avoids, namely, open and direct communication.

The artist takes advice from the public to prove that his work is performed within the boundaries of society's self-awareness.

> We will work out the whole painting and each of its parts by making sketches on paper and take advice on it with our friends. [De pictura] [46]

The painter is also admonished to take advice from orators and geometricians, and even told to hide behind his painting, so as to overhear comments from passers-by.

> Friends should be consulted, and, while the work is in progress, any chance spectators should be welcomed and their opinion heard. The painter's work is intended to please the public. So he will not despise the public's criticism and judgment when he is still in a position to meet their opinion. They say that Apelles used to hide behind his painting, so that the viewers could speak more freely, and he could more decently listen to them enumerating the defects of his work. [De pictura] [47]

In order to create the illusion of identity between the author's task and that of the painter, Alberti readily exploits the logic of this situation to strike home the advantages of his authorial position. Since the artist is

made to function in the public realm from the very start, the art theorist is bound to the conditions of public communication as well. Public texts, such as De pictura, are brought forward on the assumption that society is indeed salvageable. As a consequence, Alberti, in the authorial guise of Baptista, must insist on the principle of open communication and appear to simulate willingly the alleged universality of public discourse.

When he speaks as "a painter to painters," Alberti (i.e., Baptista) is affirming the integral relationship between author and artist. He further stresses his supposed allegiance to the principle of open communication by arguing in De pictura that "the learned and the unlearned will agree with me (doctis et indoctis consentibus),"[48] a statement that he repeats in De re aedificatoria.[49] In fact, all public artifacts, whether they be treatises, paintings, or buildings, are something in which "the learned and the unlearned both take delight."[50]

The advantage of a discourse that is divided into public and private is that this fictional ideal state of open communication can be projected in a writing with full approval of the very society against which it is working. Here, if anywhere, is Alberti's "art theory." It is the pretended belief in an impossibly intact society that is the alter image of the real, fragmented, and self-defensive

textual world of the writer, who has to take cover, as it were, in his "Humanist" non-presence.

From the point of view of the authorial pose of Baptista, the aesthetic treatises serve only to document society's imaginative potential to visualize itself differently from what it is. That this scenario is not factual is less important than the circumstance that the presence of the text itself is a demonstration of viability and a tenuous belief in the future. It is not so much reform Alberti had in mind, but the documentation of man's capacity to be able still to project a better world.

IX

THE DISCOURSE ON THE GOOD AND HAPPY LIFE

Alberti's treatises should be thought of as treaties, pacti, as Alberti himself calls them, between society and nature, mediated by the Albertian author. The scope of these writings is thus purposefully limited and restricted, and even simplified so that the voice of authority, that of the mediator, can be clearly heard. Alberti, however, is not very optimistic about the success of this operation. The loss of the text is always prefigured in his mind. Therein lies the drama of the precarious present.

The text the Albertian author hands over to society is mute in respect to the literary ontology that went into its conception. This must be the case in order to protect the operative nature of the text as a vision limited to an hypothesized, intact future. The articulation of this pose could be called "The Discourse on the Good and Happy Life." Discourse, defined as a type of public treaty, so the Albertian author tells us, "is not employed to excite discord, or bring harm to others, but serves to communicate our affection, our senses, and our understanding of a good and happy life."[1] The Good and Happy Life is held out as a vision that counterbalances the reality of a society that permanently fragments itself.

To make sure that the operative impact of this discourse is not threatened by the author's own cynicism and skepticism, he has to remain constantly alert to the ultimate responsibility of the literary enterprise. Like the works of the aged and wise Genipatro, one of Baptista's "fathers," the "text", whatever the true thought of the author, is to be "well composed and very correct, full of teachings and wonderful kindness, welcomed by good people and scholars."[2] As such, Genipatro's words, so Alberti adds, "will represent authority."[3] And so it is too with Baptista's De pictura, which in a sense can be viewed as a realization of this idea.

Let us now point out where The Discourse on the Good and Happy Life appears in Alberti's writings. Let us first emphasize that it is not always identical with the public treatises, but can be dispersed or contained in them. It may even appear in a private work. If the Discourse is contained within a writing, rather than constituting the total text, then it is more condensed and polemical than the writing in which it is embedded. It can be conceived of as within quotation marks, as indeed it often is.

An example of such a "text" within a text can be found in the early De commodis, in which Alberti closes the treatise by allowing "a book to speak," that is a fictional book that ancient authors would have written, so we are told, had they been able to predict the present state of affairs. Alberti quotes from this book, --this "intact wisdom

(integrameque prudentiam)"-- to summarize for his reader his thoughts on the nobility of life, on the struggles of the virtuous writer, and on the need to "elevate oneself" and "strive toward the good and happy life." This is the "text" that Peniplusius (Rich in Talent, Poor in Money) could have fashioned. It is here presented in full.

> "Oh young men, exhausted by such literary vigils, where are you headed? What use are these great efforts? What are you looking for from us with such work and constancy? For what are you striving with your hard labor, your anxieties and meditations? You deceive yourself if you hope to find pleasures while you torment yourself with your preoccupations. Oh, perhaps you never impose on yourself repose? Perhaps you hope to find riches. Have you not learned from us to not fear poverty. Or, perhaps it has escaped you that none of our things are objects for sale."
>
> "Let it not be concealed from you, Oh young men, that we consider it more useful to have our loved ones poor rather than rich. We know this from experience: it never happened that a scholar who once he became rich and completely caught up in pleasure and luxury, did not begin to become troubled by familiarity, friendship, and a circle of friends. And why do you ask, with insistence, for power? To enjoy honors? Do you search to increase your honors? Do you desire grandezza?
>
> "You fool yourself, young men, you fool yourself if you prefer the adulation of the vulgar and the applause of the common folk over virtue. Learning and knowledge do not hold up against the capriciousness of good fortune, the noise of the market place, the favors of the people. These are things that are passing, unstable, fragile, and full of useless fatigues, full of dreads, full of suspicions, and full of dangers and mishaps."
>
> "Who would ever compare all of this with the quietude of the soul, with a stability of virtue, and the beauty of the disciplines? Perhaps it escapes you, Oh young man, that our only defense is virtue? And we do not love it if our souls are full of greed, full of luxury, bombast, and superficiality? And that we desire that the mind divest itself of, and weed out, all darkness, all shadows

of dishonesty. Moreover, Oh young men, do you not see with what light and splendor this wisdom of which we talk makes those who have given themselves to us illustrious and famous?"

"Remember the past. Look to us for the old teaching and the intact wisdom. Then you can elevate yourself and sustain yourself against the inroads and the assaults of fortune. Put away your greedy mind. Free your soul from the inflated hopes for grandezza. Flee these enslaving labors on behalf of wealth, of futile fame, and of the praise that corrupts even though you try to link it to writing. It will be foolish to run after these with a desire for something that will not follow from your activity. You would be more foolish to endeavor to obtain that which, if it does not come about, will bring you recriminations for unnecessary fatigues, and which, if reached, will bring you shame because of it."

"Strain yourself with a certain moderation. Exercise virtue with a particular diligence, and you will receive from us not only knowledge of doctrines, meritoriously coupled with virtue, but even more hope, reasonings, and meditations. Day to day, you will become always more adequate. From the moral doctrines and the arts, in fact, you can obtain the highest goal to aspire to knowledge; from virtue you will obtain divine peace of soul, fame, dignity and happiness."

"If, as you should, you pursue virtue, after having left aside all other things, to obtain the greatest possible freedom from vices, then you will also receive praise and great glory. Virtue is primary to all else and excels. She is, in fact, joined to and united with a particular divine force by means of which we become liberated from all vices and all errors and by means of which will follow enduring praise, honor, true and stable pleasure, and the quiet of the spirit. He who reaches out to join such virtue with his soul by desire and practice, he who remembers that a solid and clear virtue will not be found among the opinions of the mob, but in the excellence and splendor of the soul, he will not have any commerce with fortune, but will esteem all those benefits that are resting in virtue."

"From there on, he can with certainty conduct an honorable and happy life very similar to that of the gods. Thus stand matters, oh young man, dedicate yourself with care to virtue, and have this opinion on the comforts of fortuna, namely

> that none of them should be desired with too much enthusiasm, and that none should be put in front of the benefits of the soul. Absolutely nothing should be desired by the most esteemed and virtuous men except wisdom and virtue, and nothing must be feared or fled from more than ignorance and vice. In fact, he who wants to make his soul most ornate must certainly despise, hate and abhor those vulgarities that one calls pleasures, for they turn him away from virtue, and which have names such as Opulence and Richness. One must also abhor all those other pestilent, bad habits of the soul which are commonly called by the names of Honor, Dignity and Grandezza."
>
> "If you will attempt this with immense diligence in all your endeavors, Oh young man, you will find that literature is pleasurable, very useful in obtaining praise and glory and very adaptable in producing the fruit which will be transmitted to posterity and therefore to becoming immortal." [De commodis] [4]

This "Discourse on the Good and Happy Life," from the "mind" of Peniplusius, is obviously not to be viewed as technical instruction, but as an appeal and warning for the aspiring youthful writer to "remember the past" and to comprehend the need to be accountable to posterity, for posterity is the anchor that steadies the unstable present.

The themes expounded in the "text" at the end of De commodis, are of course similar to those found in Momo's tabella, which is also brought to light in the closing paragraphs of the story where Alberti recounts how Jove discovers the manuscript in his library. Momo writes how the prince "can conduct himself magnificently in public and with economy in private," and how "he is a combatant for peace just as he is one against his enemies." Moreover, his judgments take into account "the facts known to the few, and not only those

facts known universally." Alberti closes the manuscript with a theory of how Jove should distribute the good and bad things known to man. It is important to note that the suggested ideal world is not devoid of evil; rather, evil exists open to all who wish to partake of it.

> The contents of the manuscript were as follows: The prince must not behave as if he does nothing, but he should not do everything either. What he does, he should not do by himself but he should not do it with all the others either. He has to make sure that nobody is extravagantly rich and that not too many people are poor and without means.
>
> He has to help the good ones even if this is against their will, and he should not damage the evil ones unless he is forced to against his will. He has to judge the people, taking into account the facts known to the few, and not only the facts which are known universally. He should abstain from reform except where he is forced to out of necessity to save the dignity of the state, or when reform offers itself as a secure opportunity of increasing his glory.
>
> He must conduct himself magnificently in public and economically in private. He has to fight against pleasures no less than he does against his enemies. He will provoke peace in his people, glory and popularity to himself with acts of peace rather than with warlike enterprises. He should listen patiently to the prayers of the humble people and should tolerate with moderation their inconveniences, if he wants that the small people support his luxury.
>
> Many other such pieces of advice were in the manuscript, but the most useful against the boring difficulty of government was that of all existent things one should make three piles. One pile should have what is good and desirable. In the second there should be that which is bad, and in the third, there should be all that which is by itself neither good nor bad. The distribution should take place like this. The gods Activity, Eagerness, Zeal, and Diligence, along with other similar gods, should fill their laps with objects taken from the first pile and walking through the porticoes, theaters, temples, squares, and all other public places, should offer spontaneously these things to whomever they meet and to whoever showed that they

> desired these things. In the same way, Envy, Ambition, Desire, Laziness, Sloth, and other goddesses of this kind, with their laps filled and open, should distribute willingly the bad things to those who desired them. Regarding the things that are neither good nor bad in and for themselves, but become good or bad on the basis of use, such as wealth, honor, and similar privileges searched for by man, these things should be left all to the decision of Fortuna. She should collect them in full hands and distribute them in the quantity she desires and to whom she likes the best. [Momus] [5]

In Della Famiglia, we have another such "discourse." Though the work is itself a public writing, Alberti here too isolates at the beginning of Book I the words of his father as recalled by Adovardo.[6] "Our father, Benedetto Alberti," so Adovardo states, "used to speak in the following words." Alberti then delineates the responsibilities of the father, which, we should observe, are congruent with those of the prince.

- Watch over the family from all sides.
- Use authority rather than power.
- In every thought put the good, the peace, and the tranquility of the family first.
- Know how to steer toward the harbor of honor, prestige, and authority.
- Fill the young with good council.
- Remain alert.
- Be like a common father to all the young.

We have one "text" for the writer by Peniplusius, one for the politician by Momo, and one for the father by Benedetto. De pictura and De re aedificatoria must be put in this same category. This is particularly true of De pictura, for it is "spoken," as we have proven, in the authorial mode of Baptista. Like the others, De pictura is a "text," that

attempts to reestablish the authority of the text as an important element in the Good and Happy Life.

> Paulus Aemilius and many other Roman citizens taught their sons painting among the liberal arts in the pursuit of the good and happy life. [De pictura][7]

In imitation of the ancient tradition, Alberti addresses in particular the young students of painting. He pauses in the opening paragraphs of Book II to create enthusiasm in their hearts for the art of painting. He begins with the following words:

> As the effort of learning may perhaps seem to the young too laborious, I think I should explain here how painting is worthy of all our attention and study. [De pictura] [8]

Here, Alberti is fulfilling his authorial role in the Discourse on the Good and Happy Life by purporting to persuade a younger generation to take on the tasks at hand. The aged and disillusioned, such as Libripeta and Momo, would not see the advantages of such a discourse; they would even ridicule it. But Baptista, guided by the aged Paleterus, is still hopeful. He lays out a series of persuasive propositions in order to entice the young to take up their task. Following the principles of rhetorical persuasion outlined by Averroes,[9] Alberti, in the opening paragraphs of Book II, enumerates the reasons painting is worthy of the young pupil's attention:

- Painting possesses a divine power.
- Painting contributes to the honest pleasures of the mind.

- Painting renders objects even more precious than they are.
- Its masters feel like gods.
- Whatever beauty there is derives from painting.
- Painting was not neglected by the ancient authors.
- Painting has assumed the most honored part in public and private life.
- Good painters were always and everywhere held in the highest esteem and honor.
- Princes and nobles have devoted themselves to painting.
- Painting is the most difficult of artistic tasks.
- Learned and unlearned delight in painting.
- It is taught in the pursuit of the good and happy life.
- Nature delights in painting.
- Painting attracts all ages of unlearned and learned.
- Painting gives pleasure in leisure time.

Each of the above arguments is supported by either a testimony taken from Cicero, Pliny, or Quintilian in the form of, "It is said that...", or is followed by an example taken from classical literature, with the exception of the last argument. These arguments are not arguments in the strict meaning of the word, but are premises to the proposition that "painting is worthy of our attention and study." Even the last argument, in which the author claims to be drawing from his own experiences, is a standard rhetorical device aimed at opening the reader's mind to the author's arguments.

> Let me openly profess something about myself. Whenever I devote myself to painting for pleasure, which I very often do when I have leisure from other affairs, I persevere with such pleasure in finishing my work that I can hardly believe later on that three or four hours have gone by. [De pictura] [10]

All these propositions are "things affecting persuasion," employing "testimony and examples to awaken a desire for the appreciation of something." None of the above premises can, therefore, really be considered part of an "aes-

thetic theory," since none is proven or examined. Rather, they belong to the rhetorically simplified "text" on the Good and Happy Life. It is not an aesthetic which is espoused, but a frame of mind in which painting, just as writing, or architecture, or even being a father, is a moral factor in a rhetorically envisioned healthy society. The rhetorical excesses are permitted since they are not intended to deceive, but to preserve faith in man's nobility. It is the obvious that is no longer seen, and the obvious that has to be propounded in a specialized discourse conducted on the plateau of rhetorical elevation.

Because the thrust of Alberti's philosophy is textual, he is particularly attracted to architectural surfaces that can be put to use as bearers of programmatic messages. The writing of inscriptions "is a custom that ought to be unconditionally approved."[11] "We consider written maxims fitting, for their purpose is to make men more just, moderate, thrifty, virtuous, and acceptable to God."[12] The whole pavement, Alberti goes on to say, "should be taken up with lines and figures pertaining to music and geometry so that the minds of all present can be drawn toward culture."[13]

Alberti saw the texts on the Good and Happy Life as attempts to establish, or rather reestablish, a focal point for social consciousness. The purpose of this kind of writing is only "the cultivation of virtue and glory."[14] Consequently, "citizens, though ignorant, became so enraptured by

his [Baptista's] books that they became fond of literature," so Alberti states in his Vita.[15] As for those who are already wise, Alberti hopes that they will moderate their scholarly interests according to a greater social necessity.

> Wise men... are attentive to the study of books and exercise their mind with them from consideration that their first duty... is to be adorned not with scholarship but with virtue." [De commodis] [16]

Writing is, however, not an end in itself. With book in hand, these men can always preserve the ideal in their imagination and enrich and preserve the historical tradition. Alberti relates that in the past the value of the text was very much understood.

> And I recalled what was said about Alexander of Macedonia, to whom someone gave a beautifully wrought small coffer. He didn't know what worthy and precious thing to put into it that would be as worthy as the coffer itself. So he ordered that the works of Homer should be kept in it, for these are certainly the most authentic mirror of human life. [Profugiorum] [17]

The description of Homer's work as a "specchio verissimo" is interesting since it was a common medieval term for the Bible.[18] The importance of the book, as a metaphor for divinity, was of course all important in the Middle Ages. Augustine, we might recall, even went so far as to claim that "divine power is called a book because in it will be real, all that it causes one to remember."[19] However, for the Renaissance, it is Dante who reemphasized the importance of the text for man's salvation. His closing image is a vision of the elect in the presence of the throne of God as a "book bound by one bond of love."[20]

The tabella that Momo hands over to the gods symbolizes man's desire for society to rewrite the text, the pact that bonds men together. Much like a legal contract, Alberti's rhetorically elevated and rhetorically simplified Discourse on the Good and Happy Life is itself a mirror of society as is explained in De Iciarchia.[21] The new "text," much as the laws of Moses, is a new contract between society and its moral conscience. It stands symbolically for the now missing center of gravity.

> With only ten laws did Moses rule the entire nation of the Hebrews, on the worship of God, the integrity of marriage, justice, and love of fatherland. For the Romans, twelve was enough for them to enlarge their republic. We, however, have sixty cabinets full of laws, and to this we add every day new laws. [De Iciarchia] [22]

The Discourse on the Good and Happy Life, however, is not a universal blueprint for a better life, but is only a Discourse among the few to preserve among themselves the illusion of a unified purpose. It is a Discourse only understood, cherished, and supported by the few because they alone are committed to one another's preservation as bearers of historical consciousness. In their isolation across time and space, they recognize each other infallibly as part of a family of friends. "Good men should always consider themselves friends."[23] And since such good men are all godlike, Alberti points out that "serving God means nothing else than aiding and abetting the good ones..."[24]

The Discourse on the Good and Happy Life, an illusion maintained by the few, stands in conflict with society's urge to be lured away by its proclivity toward transitory diversions.

> The multitude lives perpetually; they change progeny by progeny, their age flies away; they live on the earth tardy in wisdom, quick in dying and complaining in life. [Profugiorum] [25]

The masses cannot be expected to value the pertinence and longevity of the text. "The plebeians, who can make only dreadful and obscene judgments,... are wholly negligent of those things that are absolutely necessary for the good and happy life."[26]

The fate of these "texts," as we have already seen, is, therefore, uncertain. Leopis's writings are from the start "operam perdis."[27] Momo's manuscript is negligently allowed to "decay into dust."[28] The writings of Neofrono, who in Defunctus represents the voice of the enraged and dead "Alberti," are ripped apart and turned into erudite wrapping paper.[29] And in Vita, Alberti describes how he turned on his own work, Della Famiglia, maliciously belittled by Alberti's own relatives, in frustration and anger and set out destroy it. Only the beneficent and timely appearance of a "prince" --alas, one of the transcendent few-- saves the work from the distraught author.

> He gave the three books of Della Famiglia to his relatives so they could read it. But he couldn't stand it that among all the lazy Albertis, only one bothered to read the title, though the books were being requested by others from outside... Because of this insult he decided to burn the books, and

> would have done so, if just then some prince hadn't asked him for the books. [Vita] [30]

In Profugiorum, Alberti, in the guise of Agnolo (Baptista's "father"), angrily remarks that Baptista's writings will be purposefully shunned, even though they "are an ornament to the Tuscan language... and praise the value and glory of our fellow citizens."[31]

> But I doubt, Baptista, that you will be able to act out your works, for there is so much envy and perverseness among mortals that divides this age of ours.... Oh, my fellow citizens, will you continue to offend he who loves you? [Profugiorum] [32]

On the same theme, Alberti, in De commodis, cynically points out that the survival of the text, even physically, is impossible. Taking up a theme from Petrarch, he lambastes professional book dealers who were once shepherds, "coming from the dung heap," but now "manage books and writings" only for profit. The heritage is in the wrong hands and its future precarious.

> Law, theology, natural philosophy and ethics, and all of the other forms of literature that is worthy, excellent, and suitable only for free men (oh, abominable crime!) first were set up for auction, then sold publicly. A large number of merchants, quick to present their offers, came from all parts. From the fields, from forests, from the serf lands, and from the dung heaps came a vast multitude. They were not really men, but, on the contrary, they were beasts, born for servile work, who, after having despised the countryside, made a sudden burst to put in sale and desecrate the discipline of writing. Oh the plague of literature!. Those who should use the rake and pitch fork shamelessly manage books and writings! [De commodis] [33]

Significantly, the "texts" of Alberti's "authors," unlike those of the book dealers, are given to society free of charge. In De pictura, for example, Alberti, in the Baptistian mode, like a latter-day prophet, takes the "art of painting [i.e., the treatise De pictura] down from the heavens."[34] However, texts that are given free of charge ironicaly are not esteemed. Alberti, however, has made Baptista optimistic. "In the future," he [i.e., Baptista] states there will be those --meaning of course those similar to him-- who will continue his efforts.

> There will probably be some who will correct my mistakes and who will be of far greater assistance to painters than I in this excellent and honorable art. I implore them, should they in the future exist, to take up this task eagerly and to readily exercise their talents on it and perfect this most noble art. [De pictura] [35]

In contrast to the necessarily hopeful frame of mind displayed in De pictura, Neophrono, in Defunctus, speaking from the safety of the underworld, laments that in reality his writings were placed on a dead end path. Since books are only preserved for profit, and not because they represent deposits of society's wisdom, there will be fewer and fewer who will want to continue the struggle to preserve The Discourse on the Good and Happy Life.

> I am convinced that these times are exceedingly deplorable, so disgraced because there are so few men, truly erudite, who are capable of amending my writings. [Defunctus] [36]

Alberti holds that his writings, spoken into a void, would not be recognized for what they were, namely, a last attempt to speak out against the world governed by "negligentia". Alberti shows that contemporary society, oblivious to the true value of the "text" as a symbol for the struggle for The Good and Happy Life places itself on the brink of annihilation. The memory of the past has to be linked with posterity against the dangers lurking in the unstable present.

In Theogenius, the wise Theogenius (The Origin of the Gods) is challenged by the distraught Microtiro, who represents society and its turbulence. Theogenius reveals to him the contents of the text he is in the process of writing in an attempt to assuage Microtiro's anxieties. Like Momo, he wants to summon man back to his senses, back to the origin. Yet, he himself is already contaminated by the spell of paralysis. His efforts will be wasted and death will be the ultimate freedom from a tyrannical and hypocritical world.[37]

"Do you not remember what diligence, what sacrifice, and what constancy I employed in writing my works? ... Oh yes, wasted.... all wasted."[38] No one will even notice the last groan of desperation as the talented fall by the wayside, exhausted by their literary struggles on behalf of mankind.

> Lively talent with exhausted petals
> --That keep the dim and various rhymes
> of the memory of happy souls,

And that speak of their victory-- diminishes,

Tell me, which heaven and which clime
Can bring to life a body already so dead?
Which would cause others
to even listen to its guttural screams?[39]

X

THE ACADEMICIANS

We have already seen how Alberti's aesthetics, which are linked to a system of self-referential notations, is also a theory of the text as the locus of man's salvation. Yet, on another level, Alberti's theory of writing is concerned with the specifics of textual organization and composition. To gain access to his writings on a more technical level, we must first analyze his critique of contemporary literature in more detail, in particular his criticism of those who, like he, produce texts.

In his efforts to define the authorial task, Alberti develops a systematic and comprehensive critique of the literary profession, a critique that has never been studied despite its importance in an analysis of his treatises on painting and architecture. He is concerned less with attacking a particular individual than he is with bringing to light over-all deficiencies of contemporary intellectual practice. Though Alberti did criticize the Scholastic philosophers, he was just as critical of the Humanist movement, perhaps even more so, for on its shoulders rests the success or failure of the regenerative effort.

The classes of individuals who are the object of Alberti's criticism are the philosophi, lit(t)erati, eru-

diti, docti, obtrectatori, and eloquenti. Alberti levels a particular argument against each group; nevertheless, their common attribute is that they are academicians, "instructed and educated in gymnasiis and libraries."[1] They are not rejected out of hand. The philosophers, so Alberti holds, could, under better circumstances, be the "trustees of the human mind and moderators of our soul."[2] In the dream Fatum et Fortuna," Alberti himself takes on the role of Philosopher. Furthermore, some of the literati, those whom he considered worthy of his respect, are frequently addressed with professional circumspection. In De pictura, Alberti claims to desire nothing more than to find approval of his work in "the ears of the erudite."[3]

Nevertheless, Alberti's critique of the academicians is clear, consistent, and throws considerable light on his own theory of writing. We shall first turn our attention to Alberti's criticism of the philosophers.

> How many people would agree with their sayings? Ah, I can almost see them now, disputing with such majesty in their words and gestures, with such severity in their sentences suitable for syllogism, with such weightiness of opinion that they can easily make us feel insignificant. It would appear a sacrilege to think them wrong... [Profugiorum] [4]

The discourse of the philosophers is bombastic and their credibility is thin. Relying on the momentum of their overblown pride, they reject the path of virtue and instead teach others the principles of false simulation. They know "how to pretend and dissimulate things on the outside of

one's face."[5] They are experts at "facial makeup," and number among those who have left the path to the "abundant good."[6] They have poisoned the relationship of trust that must fuction between author and audience. It is now wrought with suspicion and distrust.

The philosophers survive on falsity and pride, isolate themselves from society, and speak a private language, which is artificial and purposeless.

> The most vain and ambitious ones, who to him [Baptista] were the philosophers, would be seen wandering through the city simply to be seen. Here they are, as foreigners, he would say, preferring their sterile and superfluous solitude instead of the public. [Vita] [7]

Vita, we must remember, is about Baptista, who rejects not only the solitude of the philosophers, but in principle also that of Theogenius, who, like the philosophers prefers meditative isolation. However, the efforts of Theogenius, an author of the Good and Happy Life, reveal that he, unlike the philosophers, is committed, even in absentia, to the public weal.

Furthermore, unlike the philosophers, all of the Albertian authors, even Momo, are not personally ambitious. In the River of Life, described in the dream Fatum e Fortuna, the ambitious and pompous, among whom one can number the philosophers, are the first to draw the attention of Alberti who observes them from the safety of a mountain top. These

rely on artifice and not on skill to survive and are dependent on bladders filled with air to keep them afloat.

> And the shades spoke. "Those whom you perhaps consider more secure on account of the inflated skins are actually instead in the gravest danger; for the river is full of sharp reefs. See how those skins, overblown and pompous, tossed onto the reefs by the waves are broken and fail? Unfortunate are those who trust themselves to the skins...."[Fatum et Fortuna] [8]

The philosophers, vain, ambitious, and false, are not concerned with the urgency of life or with the need to help others endure life's difficulties. In their leisure, they have lost sight of issues that are significant to man's survival. Their only concern is "to invent, defend, and adorn sentences more beautiful than true."

> So it is that many [philosophers] when they loaf about can reason well about difficult and hard things that they themselves would not be able to bear well at all.... Thus, if these very learned and outstanding men, inventors, defenders, and adorners of sentences more beautiful than true, can't --according to less learned men like us-- ... understand how fragile life really is and are themselves afraid of adversity, then we, inferior in mind, condition, and profession, and weaker in position, what can we do? [Profugiorum] [9]

Thus, their efforts are in direct opposition to the program of cultural continuity. Revered as false gods they compete with the real proponents of the Good Life. Alberti argues in Momus that the philosophers will only hasten the demise of the world, for the gods themselves mistakenly look to the philosophers in their efforts to create a better world. Once the gods have succeeded in exiling Momo (Alberti), despite the fact that he was "superior among the

gods for his talent,"[10] they settle on a philosopher, Gelasto, (Gr. The Ridiculous One), who accompanies the wise Charonte, boatman of the river Styx, to earth for a tour; Gelasto is blind to the beauty of nature and attempts to describe it to Charonte in terms of "forms," "accidents," "substances," "rest," and "motion."[11] Charonte cynically remarks that such terms explain neither the beauty of nature nor the stupidity of mankind.

Even in De re aedificatoria, one can detect Alberti's needling of the philosophers, who blindly explain simple things with pseudoclarity.

> I shall not here discuss those philosophical questions, whether all waters make their way to the sea in order to rest there, or whether the alternating flux and reflux of the sea is caused by the impulse of the moon. These are points not of our purpose. However, it serves us to take notice of what we see with our eyes. [De re aedificatoria] 12

For Alberti, the philosophers not only thrive on society's self-destructive urge, but actually help speed it along by making it seem benign. In a Prohemium, addressed to Poggio, Alberti allegorically describes the philosophers as vultures "swooping down from the very ether under the stars in search for some lifeless cadaver."[13] Feeding on dead things, Alberti continues, is a precarious enterprise, for if the vultures make a mistake, they fall all the more quickly from the sky. "They [the vultures] risk a far more dangerous fall than do any of us."[14]

Because of the evils that follow in the philosophers' wake, the task of cultural continuity should not be made to rest with the philosophers. However, the gods, just like mankind, are unaware of the implications of their uncritical attempt to place the philosophers in their service. It is the philosophers "whom the gods esteem" and not Momo (Alberti).[15] They are shielded by a society unable and unwilling to detect falsity.

Alberti's critique of the philosophers, though not unexpected of a Humanist, has a particular idiosyncratic cast that cannot be watered down to the level of the general Humanist distrust of Scholastic, philosophical discourse. For Alberti, the philosophers form a class of individuals that detracts and undermines the success of the very notion of a transcendent image, which he holds out to be a fixed point toward which the creative intellect should direct and orient itself.

"These philosophers stifle with their words that which with so much efficacy determines our soul," Alberti laments.[16] They stifle the human potential in its striving to fulfill its highest capacities and sabotage attempts to create a literature useful to mankind. For the Albertian writer to be truly effective, he must be clearly distinguishable from the philosophers, who have to be demasked for the false prophets they are. However, as Alberti argues in Momus, their presence is so awe-inspiring that even the gods are

willing to sacrifice one of their own in their futile search for a philosopher.

The undeserved status of the philosophers is only one of several parts of Alberti's critique of the intellectuals. He also turns his attention to the eruditi and the dotti in lettere, among whom clearly number other Humanists. Not only are the philosophers, the vultures, responsible for perpetuating the death instinct in society, but so too are the erudite, representing effeminism and affectation. In De commodis, Alberti argues that the erudite "know only how to offer their delicate ears, almost as if it were sufficient for the dotti to refine their ears by erudition, rather than to refine their souls and heart."[17] Because knowledge for the learned is purely an aesthetic issue, they remain morally immature. "The learned are nothing more than stuttering babies."[18] They are blind to the potential dynamics inherent in the act of writing.

> An academic person (docto in lettere) will not know with just how much zeal, effort, and service he can touch this or that type of mind at a given place and time so as to win ready acceptance. This is the kind of knowledge I, however, call necessary. [Della Famiglia] [19]

In particular, Alberti criticizes the superficial allegiance of the learned to rhetorical forms. He holds that despite all their resources and eloquence, their art is made useless by their inability to transcend rhetorical formulas handed down from history. In the introduction to one of his Intercoenales II dialogues, he compares their art to an

overly decorated and ineffectual flute, weighed down by carvings depicting the entire historical heritage.

> The flute was made of ivory, and on it were decorations in precious stones, and a representation, beautifully etched by the inspired hand of a craftsman, of the whole history of antiquity. Indeed, the king of gods himself could have played it with no slight to his dignity. Yet, this pipe had one flaw: it produced absolutely no sound. [Prohemium ad Leonardum Arrentium] [20]

Alberti then explains that he prefers a simple flute of "marsh-reed stalks joined together by wax and reeds, which produced a bright and clear sound."[21] Not only is the simple flute more "expensive," meaning more rare, but it brings greater praise to its owner. Alberti prefers this flute because he claims that he has no ambition to receive awards; he wants only to be convincing. Instead of the deadening philosophical speculation and the enfeebling rhetorical practices, Alberti stresses his own "youthful" approach.

> I am one who finds it more productive to seek praise in the old way, by trying to move a peasant in the town square to dance and be festive with my more youthful (puerilis) and less pure way of speaking, rather than grow old away from any disturbances, heaping up the highest awards (ornamentis) for eloquence. [Prohemium ad Leonardum Arrentium] [22]

The erudite have brought literature into disrepute and Alberti wants emphatically to distance himself from them. In De commodis, Alberti carefully points out his employment of rhetoric is not undiscriminating and is not weighed down by automatic formulas.

> My discussion will leave aside many of the rhetorical forms, devised to strike one's imagination,

> and [it will] ignore various other ways of arguing, because I don't want to bring about the contempt of students by showing them myself how writing can be so lacking of values. [De commodis] [23]

At issue is not simply the question of presentation but the circumstance that rhetoric is employed by the learned in a manner coterminous with their moral ambiguity, the latter being for Alberti the most reprehensible of human sentiments. The rhetorical formulas, Alberti argues, permit an author to manipulate a text in such a way that the distinction between truth and falsity, between the valid and invalid employment of rhetoric, is abolished. Such ambiguity "destroys truth, reason, and all the very holy and rare things."[24] In De commodis, he gives an example of the misguided application of rhetoric.

> The famous Greek rhetorician Isocrates is said to have praised with his orations that most wicked of tyrants, Busiribe, but to have debased Socrates, the most noble and venerable of philosophers. [De commodis] [25]

Though Alberti castigates the rhetoricians, we have already seen that he himself uses rhetoric as an essential feature of his thought. However, Alberti's employment of rhetoric serves, according to him, only to defend virtue and reason, and is never abused as a mask for deceit. Thus, in his own writings, the public ones, that is, Alberti attempts to reestablish the bond of trust between the knowledgeable and the ignorant that the rhetoricians undermine. As we have already seen, Alberti, in an attempt to portray his writings as aiming to heal the author-audience relationship, asserts

in De pictura that the "learned and unlearned will agree with me (doctis et indoctis consentibus)."[26] He makes the same claim in De re aedificatoria.[27]

Regretfully, it is the abuse of rhetorical power that has become the norm. In Vaticinium (Soothsayer), Alberti explains that in contrast to the ideals of Apollo who attempted to direct men to the good and happy life, we now have only soothsayers, who pose as prophets.[28] The soothsayer sets himself up in a tent in a public square with the intention to defraud those who come to him for advice. The first three clients, as irreputable as the soothsayer, are wise to the nature of the discursive game and escape relatively unharmed, but not the last. He naively believes that the soothsayer "speaks as a friend."[29] "Let us have a good laugh at that character," the soothsayer snickers to himself after having enticed the man to give up four gold coins for nothing but promises... he is genuinely insane."[30] Artifice, for Alberti should not be employed to victimize the innocent.

In an unusual argument, Alberti claims that such moral ambiguity is forced upon the academicians if they enter the service of politics, as Isocrates had done on behalf of Busiribe, or the soothsayer working under the dictates of his own greed. Implicitly criticizing the vast majority of Humanists of his age, such as Bruni, Salutati, Palmieri, Poggio, etc., Alberti holds that the writer must guard his independence, political and psychic. Alberti explains in De

commodis that the author must "flee all public administration."[31] "It is not easy to say what displeasures are affixed to public office for free citizens; it is even less easy for the soul addicted to the arts and knowledge of the various disciplines of literature."[32] Only if the writer is a free agent can he achieve the greatest utilitas.

> Let them, the eruditi, write on topics of history. Let them consider how a prince should act, or the events of the various states, or the happenings of war.... As far as the erudite are concerned it will be enough for me to not be completely despised. [De commodis] [33]

And indeed, unlike both Poggio and Bruni, Alberti never wrote a history that puts the author into the service of the patrone. The only work by Alberti that was commissioned was the life of St. Potiti, but as we have shown he subverted even this to his own purpose. With the exception of St. Potiti, none of Alberti's writings were sponsored by the curia, for which he worked the major part of his life. This, no doubt, also accounts largely for the modest position he attained and was contented to have.

Alberti felt so strongly on this issue that he risked writing a letter, appropriately anonymous, criticizing the judges of a famous literary competition, Certame Coronario, held in Florence in 1441.[34] In his Protesta Alberti argued that the judges were unable to stand aside from political realities when they decided not to award any prizes whatsoever. In his letter, Alberti bitterly accuses the jury of jealousy, superficiality, effeminism, and duplicity.

> We were amazed since when you were asked you praised the idea [of giving a prize],... but if inside your souls you were thinking something else, then you should be damned. [Protesta] [35]

"In your divine wisdom," Alberti goes on to explain, "you knew this to be harmful,... for which of the participants didn't put aside all his private cares and his domestic matters to perfect his poems," only to find his efforts wasted.[36]

Deceitful discourse, erosion of literary freedom by political obeisance, abuse of rhetorical formulas, and the tendency toward intellectual isolation, are major causes for the disintegration of the literary profession. All these elements have destroyed confidence in the voice of the author resulting in a loss of effectiveness of his text.

Another reason for the erosion of the author's rightful position in society, is the tendency among writers to over-concentrate on the literature handed down from the past.

> It is not our task to look with great watchfulness (magnus vigilis) at the most famous and elegant examples of ancient eloquence which, no matter how hard we strain, we can never reach. [De commodis] [37]

To spend too much time studying ancient eloquence can paralyze a writer's own momentum; he would eventually find himself holding that ornate and overburdened flute that produces no sound. Humanism had deteriorated into a quagmire of pedantry and self-congratulatory bookishness. "The baggage of books," the "impedimentis librorum" as Alberti calls them in

De commodis, and the "machines and architecture associated with the libraries,"[38] were all diverting attention from the creative, self-reflective enterprise.

Instead of books being a guide to a better life, they had now become weapons in the hands of detractors who employ them to compensate for their own deficiencies. Libripeta (Book Fanatic) is an example of the "detractor" par excellence. He is so obsessed with his books that he can no longer produce anything himself. He keeps his vast library "under lock and key."[39] In Oraculum, Libripeta is chastised by the god for his nonproductivity. "Give men a reason to praise you," he advises. Libripeta, however, the consummate cynic, replies that hard study is all too tedious and that anyway "it is easier to appear learned than to actually be so." To this Apollo sneers, "So become a detractor (obtrectator)."[40]

Failing to realize their own creative potential, the learned tend to impede the progress of others and detract from the glory of true writers.

> They hope to raise themselves up by exhausting the resources of others, and, confident that they should be raised above their equals, they expect that the poverty of others would make it impossible for anyone to become a rival in the future. I will not recount the bitter struggle to do injury and seek revenge that arose from this situation, nor will I recount the grave discord, from which utter destruction easily follows; the whole sad matter lies before your eyes.... It is inappropriate for the learned and nobly educated to break into invective, except when the situation truly calls for it. [Aerumna] [41]

Because of their particular destructive actions, critics number among the most spiteful of humans in the swirling River of Life, which is, we must recall, equivalent to the continuing flow of culture itself. Their calculating and duplicitous spirit taints their hands. Not only do they thwart others from successfully negotiating the difficult waters, but they steal, as best they can (literary) fragments floating free in the river. Since "they do not swim," they hang onto the reeds growing in the mud banks,their muddied hands, Alberti explains, are forever tainted.

> Who are those that I see struggling in the waves amidst the reeds with their heads barely above water? Tell me, I pray you, about all that I see. And the shades answered:
> "They are among the worst of mortals: "suspicious," "jealous," and "calculating," as you call them; with their perverse nature and depraved habits they do not swim, but amuse themselves by impeding the strokes of others. They are similar to those that you see contriving, by fraud, to steal with one of their hands, now a floating skin, now a board, while the other hand clings tenaciously on to the rushes that grow in the mud under the water. These rushes are the most irksome of things in the river; and this kind of activity is such that those who engage in it muddy their hands which remain muddy forever. [Fatum et Fortuna] [42]

In contrast to the detractors, Alberti attempts to reestablish an open discourse. In De pictura, he invites the "reader to correct my mistakes,"[43] in De commodis, "to review the writing and make changes according to your judgment,"[44] and in Intercoenales II, "to mend the flaws of this book."[45] These are not rhetorical gestures, but challenges to other writers to enter into a productive and constructive

intellectual exchange and participate actively in an engaged dialogue.

Unlike the opportunistic and unproductive intellectuals, the Albertian author must always demonstrate that what is called for is a push into novel territory. He could be identified with those few who "swim" in the River Bio. Thus, Alberti insists in several places, his writings, unlike those of the academicians, are in the vanguard of true literary productivity.

> This is a topic never treated before. [De pictura] [46]

> This investigation was almost divinely inspired, and a matter never discussed before. [Profugiorum] [47]

> I am dealing with an unusual topic that has as yet not been developed enough. [De commodis] [48]

Alberti even wants that his efforts be understood as belonging to a special category of literature.

> For this reason I believe that one should create a category of exceptional humans who succeed in presenting new arguments, never heard of before, which transcend all opinion and expectation. [Momus] [49]

The ability to be inventive and not merely antiquarian is a sign of virility. To accomplish this requires great inner strength and resolve. The writer, who comprehends the precarious dynamics of society and attempts to give it new direction should by no means be "confused with the mass of contemporary writers." He should not even be confused with

the ancients. The task facing the contemporary writer is a far more difficult challenge.

> If a writer succeeds, by the force of expression, with variety and elegance of argumentation to give to the readers the zeal for a better life, and at the same time to amuse them with friendliness and ease (this didn't occur too frequently at the time of the ancient Latin authors either), then without doubt he must not be confused with the mass of contemporary writers. [Momus] [50]

The willingness to take risks is important if the writer wants to assert himself in the present. Alberti of course defines himself as belonging to that "category of exceptional humans," because he risked everything.

> I have always held writing in the highest consideration, and to apply oneself to it I have accepted in my life anxieties of all type, great fatigues, unpleasantness, damages, dangers, torments, and misfortune nonending, to the point that it seemed that I had dedicated myself to them completely.... I took upon myself poverty, enemies, and injuries, which were, as is well-known, neither indifferent nor light.... [De commodis] [51]

He undergoes these risks not for personal gain, but for the ultimate benefit of society. The rejuvenative effort necessitates that the writer descend into the "valley closed off by mountains where lost things are kept,... the lost liberal arts, and the ancient works of Latin literature."[52] Access to this valley, as Libripeta discovers in Somnium was dangerous and the return to the upper world even more so. Libripeta, however, if he would make the effort to recover anything would not divulge it further.

Baptista, however, not only makes the effort, but once these works have been returned, he faces new risks, weighed down by the overpowering richness of classical literature.

> It is not possible to present an argument which has not already been found and diversely treated among an endless number of writers. [Momus] [53]

In spite of the oppressive burden to restore ancient works and then confront the cultural burden that they constitute, the writer must never renounce his own efforts to uncover new topics and new ways of presenting them. Personal austerity and the causticity of the critics should not dissuade him.

> Notwithstanding my diligence, it is difficult to write something which has not already been developed in an excellent manner by the famous and illustrious ancient writers. It might even be impossible in our epoch to find ideas which, made even by the most learned, have not in former times already been developed, to a better degree, by the ancients... We, however, hoping to divulge new things are not afraid of personal austerity, or of the causticity of the critics. [De commodis] [54]

The critics, however, have so undermined confidence in the literary movement, Alberti goes on to explain, that even those writers who have made progress no longer receive the praise they deserve.

> In our epoch, there are writers who received fame from the discovery of things ignored by the ancient authors, yet they still remain unknown. [De commodis] [55]

Unlike lazy philosophers and sterile critics, the Albertian writer knows that his task is the most difficult of intellectual endeavors. The new and creative type of writing

that Alberti advocates is invariably associated with "fatigues," "vigils," "mental anguish," and requires "ferocious tenacity."[56] Lucubrazione, meaning night-time meditation, is a favorite term of Alberti's.[57] All are words that evoke the trauma the Albertian author undergoes in his efforts to prop up the precarious present. Alberti's insistence on the intensity of the literary effort is not simply a literary topos, but an essential aspect of the definition of the writer working, and suffering, on behalf of society. The statement in De re aedificatoria is a typical example.

> Continual difficulties arose every moment in explaining the matter, or in inventing names, or organizing the subject, which perfectly confounded me and disheartened me from my endeavors.... Thus, I stood doubtful, and knew not how to contine, whether I should drop my designs or go on. At length, my love and inclination for these studies prevailed, and what I lacked in capacity I made up in diligence and application. [De re aedificatoria] 58

Let us review Alberti's position. Against the philosophers, he raises the claim that they employ their intellectual and terminological isolation to divert attention from the genuinely creative individuals. Like vultures, they thrive on dead concepts. By contrast, Alberti defends his own "youthfulness" and vigor. Against the rhetoricians, he argues that their moral ambiguity, political compromising, and calculating nature make the true path of intellectual investigation difficult as now the relation between author and audience is based no longer on trust but on a circularity of

deceit. Against the critics and their book fetishism, he argues that they are concerned only with obstructing those who have committed themselves to cultural viability. In opposition to all of them, he emphasizes the fatigues, efforts, and risks, that he himself, as exemplary author, undertakes in his lonely commitment to create a new "zeal for a better life."

Let us now turn to the literati, for they are the ones who bring Alberti's critique to a true boil. It is in the preface of Book Seven of the Intercoenali II where we find the most comprehensive development of Alberti's criticism of the literati.[59] Here, Alberti explains how contemporary writers desperately and ludicrously contrive time after time to capture the moon, which represents erudition in general, and Cicero in particular. The literati think that they have cornered the moon in a forest, but the moon each night continues to elude their traps.

Alberti employs the tale to warn once more against spending all-out efforts in the imitation of classical authors. "Eloquence," so Alberti comments, "is a variegated thing,"[60] and not as simple as the image of the moon would indicate. Even the Romans knew better than to insist on emulating Cicero.

> In judging the written work of others, almost to a man, we are all so fastidious that we want to be in perfect harmony with the eloquence of Cicero, as if everyone in that earlier time thought the best authors to be also duplications of Cicero. Fools! [Prohemium] [61]

The writers fail to learn from their futile attempt to capture the moon. Once they have seen the moon, in its deceptive simplicity, they feel they can copy it on the mere basis of having seen it.

> If indeed things are now as I see them, then there is no one with however brief exposure to literature, no one who has glimpsed some species of eloquence even from afar, who at the same time is not quick to conceive a hope that he will soon turn out to be the greatest of orators. [Prohemium] 62

Alberti touches here on the differentiation between being influenced by a brilliant example in principle as against copying literally or narrowly. A literal copying of exterior trappings will not do. The seeming ease of a skilled orator such as Cicero's is a carefully guarded artifice that cannot be mechanically copied. The writers, however, believe that simply by having the right books they can copy Cicero's accomplishments and succeed, thereby, in mastering the act of writing.

> When they realize that mastering the act requires more work than they imagined in their indolence, they merely rush out armed with a supply of books, as if through books alone, and not through rigorous study they can achieve an understanding of oratory. [Prohemium] 63

As a result of all this hectic, futile waste of energy the literary profession loses its direction and virility and becomes arbitrary; the writers in their futility turn against each other. Alberti clearly has in mind the infamous invective battles of the Humanists which destroyed the potential for a productive dialogue.

> Since each person imagines that he himself has sufficiently mastered the study of oratory surpassing all others, the result among us is that we are worn out, not by striving for recognition, but by criticizing and attacking the good reputation of others. [Prohemium] 64

Alberti concludes that the literary profession will soon be wrought asunder by the general lack of informed critics as the undisciplined mode of operation takes over the field. In a harsh and penetrating rejection of the principle that anything goes, Alberti sounds almost modern.

> Each man will criticize the writings of others according to his own whim, and not according to the subject itself, as he should. Furthermore, no more learned men will be on hand to supply a reliable verdict; instead, there will be mere opinions that contradict the views of others. Some critics find pleasure only in things that are ornate and bombastic. Others view what is painstakingly executed as cold and harsh. Others eagerly read only to taste and sniff the ornamental elegance of well-rounded sentences. [Prohemium] 65

This last category, those "eager only to taste and sniff ornamental elegance," brings us to the final group of academicians, the eloquenti, who in their gluttony and self-indulgence represent excesses just as vile as the philosophers. In the same Prohemium in which we encountered the description of the vultures, Alberti also allegorizes those who represent the other extreme, namely those who relish the "full juice of vulgar eloquence." They are like heavy-set oxen who wallow in the muddy banks, much like the literary thieves in the River of Life. In their indulgence they follow the path of least resistance.

> The story is told that an ox once stood on a muddy bank among tall marsh grass and solemnly addressed words of warning to a she-goat, who had perched herself on the ancient ruins of a fallen temple atop a rugged crag. "Hey there, lusty one," said the ox, "what recklessness led you to spurn the grassy bank and make for that steep and thoroughly inaccessible path? Don't you know that it is better to fill yourself on sweet succulent grass than to crave rough stubble and the bitter fruit of the wild fig tree? Not least of all, you should take care that you don't learn to regret such precarious travel on the cliff's edge."
>
> They say that the she-goat had an answer for the ox. "Come now, you lumpish, soft-footed wretch, don't you know that, as the mouth assists the stomach, the feet dutifully assist the mouth? Besides, I have the appetite of a goat, not an ox. What I eat is all the less agreeable to you because you are not permitted to touch it. Moreover, your sedge is less pleasing to me because it is available everywhere even to the most indolent creatures....
>
> My dear Poggio, I feel that this very thing is clearly happening to me while I am engaged in writing my Intercoenali. There are quite a few readers who wish to graze and be nourished in more luxuriant and spacious fields of eloquence than I offer... However, once my audience has heard the story of the she-goat they will have no cause, I hope, to criticize me. [Prohemium ad Poggium] [66]

The broad spectrum of ills in the intellectual community, ranging from the lifelessness of the philosophers to the decadence of the indulgent literati, is not simply the result of an internal professional malaise, but is representative of the larger social evil. In De commodis, Alberti argues that society not only accepts, but demands, such low standards because it is itself debased. Defective society not only creates its own defective gods, but also demands its own defective mental climate. This the very reason, by the way, why the Albertian author has to be an exile. He does not want

to be made part of the defective intellectual establishment, from within which he would have no leverage to bring about improvement.

Certainly, Alberti would look to the ancients with a sense of longing. It had been different in Cicero's times when, according to Cicero, a knowledgeable audience exercised finely honed critique, and thus fired on the author to deliver his best.

> The eloquence of orators has always been controlled by the prudence of the audience, since all who desire to win approval have regard for the goodwill of their audience, and shape and adapt themselves to their opinion and approval. [De orator] [67]

The audience is just as guilty as its intellectual representatives. The literati are in complicity with their audience in a maddening urge towards self-destruction. The shipwrecked state of literature (naufragium in litteris) has been produced by the tempestuous and violent changes in mores (morum tempestates procellas).[68] It is now the masses who dictate their will onto the literati, for they have infiltrated the ranks of the good arts, not because they seek intrinsic value, but only because he e, they can hide their incompetence and ugliness. Like those, described in Momus, who apply a mask to hide their hideousness brought on by false simulation, the mob applies the mask of literature to hide its own false simulation, thereby, infiltrating and weakening this discipline.

> Thus we see all the holy disciplines of writing loaded and disfigured by the dredges of

> humanity.... The bumpy, scrufulous, twisted, ramshackle, stupid, dull, and incapable ones, unable to do anything else, all these devote themselves to literature.[De commodis] [69]

As a result, literature no longer attracts the "noble and illustrious ones"[70] who are turned away by the very image of an art so debased. A mysterious painter comes forth to fix the image within our consciousness.

> Who does not have before his eyes, as in a painting, the ruins and the slaughter of the disciplines and of the arts? Who cannot experience sadness at the damaged and immense disaster which happened in literature? [De commodis] [71]

The philosophers, rhetoricians, critics, and men of letters, drain away valuable energy needed to stabilize society. Bit by bit, they will be responsible not for the gradual rebuilding of the cultural edifice, but for its destruction. In a poem, "A Ramshackle Barge," Alberti eloquently portrays the battle to re-establish confidence in the literary arts as coming to a slow, grating halt. The oarless boat of the Muses is decrepit and corroded.

> A small ramshackle barge without oars,
> Made up of broken-bottomed wicker baskets,
> It is not possible for the Muses to do something anymore,
> Since the bow leaks so copiously. [72]

Literature is, so Alberti continues, just barely alive. He compares it to a dying animal "that doesn't value itself," ineffectually scratching its chin to keep itself alive. Yet even in dying its presence is felt, even more viciously than before.

> I know an animal that doesn't value itself,
> For which scratching its chin turns it alive.
> Yet even when it is finally dead
> it can scream ferociously. [73]

In De commodis he outlines, manifesto-like, his idealistic program to restore the literary enterprise to its proper place in society.

> Good literature, the noble arts and the divine disciplines, have fallen so low as to prostitute themselves. And have you gone so far, O knowledge of things divine and human, custodian over good customs and glory, inventor and generator of everything that is high, you, who used to adorn the spirit of mankind, elevating his intelligence, confering praise, esteem and dignity, govern the state and guide the world with the highest law and order? [De commodis] [74]

Alberti here evokes the very attributes that would, a few years later, become the components of his mental construct Baptista, the carrier of the operative fixed point that determines the content of the Discourse on the Good and Happy Life. Instead of adorning beautiful sentences, the Albertian author must adorn the spirit of man. Instead of exposing the weaknesses of other writers, he must herald the exalted. Instead of drowning in self-gratification he must elevate his intelligence, and instead of contributing to the corrosion of society's creative productivity, he must stand guard over good customs and good arts. The rhetorical exaltation of virtue, never wholly believed in, should be

preserved, however, as the mythical center of society, giving orientation to its path into posterity. The articulation of this theme should be the only and common task of the Humanists, at least in the public documents.

XI

ALBERTI'S THEORY OF CRITICAL ECLECTICISM

From Alberti's highly dramatic and impassioned critique of contemporary literary practices, we now turn to his writings themselves. Alberti's treatises, taken all together, seem to portray a broad spectrum of approaches, but if we begin with his theoretical concerns we find them to be quite consistent with each other.

If the promise of the Humanist movement was to fulfill its function, it had to remain conscious of the thrust of its purpose, namely, the revitalization of the literary communicative enterprise. Alberti felt that Humanism had lost its momentum as it did not raise itself above antiquarianism, idle scholarship, and display of frivolous erudition, all of which had added up to a betrayal of the original mission. Unless concerted efforts are made on the side of the Humanists to define the author's true function in society, society would slide ever closer to the brink of destruction.

As Alberti saw it, the task of the Humanist movement consisted in an elaboration of the Discourse on the Good and Happy Life, an artificial discourse meant to activate man's

better instincts. It is the path along which society must be steered so that the illusion can be maintained that it conceivably could come to terms with its evil.

The responsibility for maintaining the Discourse on the Good and Happy Life lies only with the Albertian "Humanist" writer, who, like the vestal virgins of old, is in charge of the sacred fire. It had been Momo's guilt that he had lost the sacred fire, and thereby his purpose![1] Thus, the Discourse on the Good and Happy Life is not a discourse on "ethics" in the sense that it is directed at immediate, realizable and pedagogical purposes. Rather it is in principle a Discourse on the myth of the spiritual survival. This, for Alberti is the true purpose of "ethics." All of his writings, whether it be his treatise on cryptography or painting, are treatises on the various themes of cultural survival. Whether we term them today technical, aesthetic, or ethical is largely irrelevant.

The Discourse in essence advocates an "intact wisdom." Oppossed to it is Libripeta's negative "wisdom learned from the sewer." Both are products of Alberti's mind. However, what Alberti means by "intact wisdom" is not self-evident. It does not refer to the process of re-transcribing ancient texts in revivalist fashion. Rather it turns around an all-important confrontation of the author with the textual material handed down from the past. He is the arbiter of its usefulness. In this chapter we shall turn to Alberti's theory

of how the writer should deal with the wealth of material inherited from the ancients in a fashion that conforms to his responsibility.

To begin our study of Alberti's approach to writing, let us recall two words that are of special significance: "claritas" and "brevitas".

> I saw to it that my writing should be clear rather than elegant and ornate. [De pictura] [2]
>
> Our writing will be brief and succinct, at least as the vastness of the subject matter permits. [De commodis] [3]
>
> In this discussion there was a surprising brevity. [Profugiorum] [4]
>
> You will notice a bare simplicity of style. [Della Families] [5]
>
> I propose to myself to deal with the subject accurately and demonstrate a clear method rather than be eloquent. [De re aedificatoria] [6]

In De commodis, Alberti "anticipates" that, because of the brevity of his approach, he will receive due praise. His aim is to be "dry and humble,... and proceed without passion, so as to win the approval of the literati."[7]

We must not naively interpret claritas and brevitas in a contemporary vein. The words do not mean scientific clarity, nor are they a proto-modern declaration for empiricism. Rather, Alberti wishes here to demonstrate that the author is focusing intensely on the literary task. Writing is driven along by a sense of urgency in response to the cul-

tural crisis, an urgency that the academicians, for whatever reason, fail to recognize.

Despite the assertions about the clarity, youthfulness, and sanity of his approach, it is not difficult to recognize that even according to contemporary standards Alberti's writings cannot be labelled as especially clear. We need only compare Alberti's writings with those of Gianozzo Manetti. In his treatise De dignitate et excellentia hominis, for example, Manetti, expressing the Papal opinions unambiguously and convincingly, outlines and presents his arguments as he himself states "in a clear and open language."[8] Manetti lives up to his pronouncement, leaving little doubt as to his opinions, even if they are all too obviously in accord with the Papal position. Manetti's talents in this respect earned him great prestige and fame.

In comparison to Manetti's writing, Alberti's works can hardly be described as clear. We have already seen how Alberti in Profugiorum gradually infiltrates the characters, silently transforming a public debate into a private solliloqy. We have also seen how, in De re aedificatoria, subjects such as beauty hardly receive clear and lucid exposition. In his Vita, Alberti acknowledges that critics were wondering why his writings were "so lacking in order."[9] To their charges, Alberti openly responds that his "disputations are like a bag filled with ripped and torn books."[10]

However, this should not devalue Alberti's insistence on clarity in opposition to the academicians. The "torn-ness" of his books is the result of the fragmentation of society itself, and mirrors its true non-intact state.

Claritas, for Alberti, is the method by which the contemporary author can force his work into a more permanent shape. In Profugiorum Alberti uses claritas as a type of self-chastizement countering the tendency to get lost in the abundance of the material. He reminds himself "I don't want to dwell on the subject or appear long-winded."[11] Profugiorum, not unlike De re aedificatoria, is to a large degree a "collection" of information from a vast body of source material which can easily get out of control.

Clarity should not force the writer into textual austerity. There is, as Alberti notes in De re aedificatoria, a "pleasure in gaining information."[12] In Profugiorum Alberti even describes how one interlocutor throws literary gems behind him to slow down the progress of his pursuer who has to stop and collect them; nevertheless, Agnolo admits that though such tactics of sowing and collecting are important in developing one's thought, there remains an urgent need to be clear, purposeful, and unevasive.

> NICCOLO: We understand you Agnolo and take delight in your thought. But listen, you are much like Darius in Asia, who, while escaping, spread here and there gold, gems, and other very precious things to better escape, and to stop and delay those who were chasing him. So you, in order to turn us away from what you promised [to tell us],

> interpose new questions, certainly worthy of consideration somewhere else....
>
> AGNOLO: Come on then, it suits us to sum up some of yesterday's conclusions. [Profugiorum] [13]

Clarity for Alberti is thus hardly an absolute or philosophic condition, but linked with what can be called discursive extension. It includes the gems that are thrown in, as well as all the spontaneous connections that only a writer can make who is not a slave to rhetorical formulas. Consequently, though clarity is a must, it should not obliterate textual enjoyment. In dedicating a few of his Table Talks to Poggio Bracciolini, Alberti makes the following culinary analogy.

> I enjoy the rare treats served up at rich feasts of admittedly richer authors than myself, just as I enjoy from time to time the somewhat bitter herbs used to spice a relish. [Proemium ad Poggium] [14]

In a similar frame of mind, linking textual enjoyment with textual purpose, Alberti, in De re aedificatoria, writes "we have collected together things pertinent to the purpose;" nevertheless, he keeps admonishing himself to "speak succinctly".[15]

The give and take between discursive extension and discursive clarity, between textual pleasure and textual focus, typifies all of Alberti's writings. It holds especially true for Profugiorum where Alberti hopes that "the philosophers are not listening," for otherwise it would be necessary to "have had more idle time and to have disputed

with a greater pre-planned rationality." To this he adds, "it is not my aim to conduct a philosophical session with precision and circumspection."[16] Though he rejects here a rationally pre-planned discussion, the progress of the text is not arbitrary. "I will only relate what comes to mind that is relevant to my purpose."[17]

Indeed, Alberti outlines each of the three sections of Profugiorum. The first chapter "briefly gathered many abundant and excellent memories" on the topic of premeditation and on how to "exclude and forbid any perturbation."[18] The second chapter discusses issues concerning people "already stricken by some sadness or other impetus of the soul."[19] And the final chapter, based on "documents" supposedly taken from Agnolo, discusses "general admonitions regarding particularly insistent and obdurately grave melancholies."[20]

Though Alberti accepts the digressions, memories, and documents necessary to develop his argument, he clearly recognizes the limits and the need to maintain a clear structure. He does not want to become himself like the eloquent oxen who graze indiscriminatly "in the luxuriant and spacious fields of eloquence."[21] It is between the two -- between philosophical precision and rhetorical elegance-- that Alberti stakes out a territory that he calls claritas and which is the region toward which the new literature should aim if it wants to revive society from its stupor. To

make sure that he does not wander too close to either extreme, his writings contain the checks and balances inherent in the two principles, textual pleasure and textual purpose.

This territory is clearly not as narrow a path as Alberti might theoretically have wished. On the contrary, it allows a great freedom, as he himself shows, by placing texts at different ends of the scale. In *De commodis*, Alberti can stress *claritas* and give up the use of examples altogether.

> This discourse, dignified and only concerned with the truth, is alien to all rhetorical affectations. Thus, we have left out all the amplifications. [*De commodis*] [22]

In *Profugiorum*, however, full of examples and digressions, Alberti can still insist that *claritas* has not been jeopardized.

> NICCOLO: But who would be so fastidious not to approve and praise the one [referring to Agnolo] who put industry and zeal in such a carefully constructed work? [*Profugiorum*] [23]

De re aedificatoria and *De pictura* lie in between the more theoretical *De commodis* and the richer *Profugiorum*. The first chapter of *De pictura* has no examples, as its subject matter is essentially mathematics. But chapters two and three are characterized by a rhythmic and well thought out alteration between theory and examples.

However, we must recall that the various combinations, whether with or without examples, are not different in the over-all sense, for Alberti always wants to drive home the

urgency of the literary operation, an urgency that the academicians fail to take into consideration. Since writing is not only the most difficult of intellectual endeavors, but is itself a central act in spiritual regeneration, claritas is something that should not come easy. "You see how I have strained my wits to be brief," Alberti writes in Della Famiglia.[24]

The effort that the Albertian writer must put into his work, the fatigues, and "lucubrations," is in accordance with the very definition of the literary endeavor as an attempt to create a fine line between literary pleasure and literary purpose, while taking into account the wealth of the recorded past. The writer must begin his endeavor by collecting together, with great labor, what had been said before, for the specific purpose of transcending it, and offering new variants. The mountainous wealth of literature must be attacked frontally. The writer must have about him a sense of impatience, determination and above all perseverance.

> I have heard of a vast number of praised books, written by the Greeks, the names of which are practically unknown in this century. And let me add to these our own Latin authors, almost infinite, who published an unlimited number of excellent books. Such a number of poets, comics, tragedians, elogians, satirists, epic writers, Ennio, Cecilio, Licino, Attilio, Trabea, Lucezio, Turpilio, Gallo, Nevio, Lucrezio! But how can one remember all the poets, the historians, the orators such as Accio, Nigidio, Cecilio, Cecina, Cassio, Lucilio, Laberio, Afranio, Pacuvio, Sulpizio, Ortensio, Cotta, Fabio, Catone, Pisone, Fannio, Venonio. Clodio, Celio, Macro? [etc.] Let us not even mention you, O Cicero, so dear to us, and your books De Gloria, De Consolatione and De Republica. [De commodis] [25]

In some fields, like architecture, there is more of a textual body, while in painting there is not much at all. In De re aedificatoria, Alberti refers to thirty-five authors, not to mention the citations for which no author is given. It is understandable that, anguished over the difficulty of dealing with "things disparate and dispersed," he admits that it might take a "greater genius than I can offer."[26] In De pictura Alberti considers himself lucky that he was one of the first to engage in this operation. He mentions only eight authors. However, these do not reflect the texts employed in the making of the work, which seem to be fewer, in principle Cicero, Pliny, and Quintilian.[27]

The wealth of examples is a mixed blessing but essential to the definition of contemporary thought. The writer should not lose himself therein, but transcend it. In Fatum et Fortuna, for example, Alberti first points out that he had taken into consideration the works of ancient authors.

> I sat up one night late, into the small hours, picking through all that our ancestors have left us on the subject of fate. [Fatum et Fortuna] [28]

He then adds that he fell asleep, and that only in dreaming did he find "something more satisfying." In Della Famiglia, Alberti similarly begins by claiming "to call to mind ancient records," but soon adds that "the subject was presented ... different from what we find in the ancient authors."[29]

Unlike the critics who are too lazy to produce anything of value, and the philosophers who loaf about only to invent beautiful sentences, and the rhetoricians who revel in the ambiguity of their moral and political stands, the new writer must simultaneously immerse himself in the material of the past, while keeping his gaze fixed on the ultimate goal of the future, the Discourse on the Good and Happy Life. As a consequence of this effort, the literary task takes prominence over the philosophical task. It will not be the writers who learn from the philosophers, but the philosophers who learn from the writers. Philosophers are "alumna litterarum," as Alberti argues in De commodis.[30]

If the writer succeeds in this increasingly difficult task --one that requires an increasingly sharper intelligence-- only then can he claim to be listed on equal terms with the ancients. "To have the correct and true wisdom and knowledge, one must have an acute and penetrating force of mind and talent, together with a great quickness in investigation in knowing how to discern and distinguish things."[31] Only with this mental acuity can the contemporary author transcend the rich offerings of the past.

> If I could then confront your talent with the doctrines of the ancients, that is the power of your expression, there would be no comparison. In fact these ancient writers were in their time very illustrious, but in our epoch... you [Neofrono] cannot be considered second to anyone. You should be made the paragon. [De commodis] [32]

Past literature, taken not for its erudition, but for its wealth of examples points out the fullness of history, a fullness that exposes the ineffectual brittleness of contemporary philosophical speculation. It shows not only the patterns and variety of the human spirit, but more importantly, it shows the richness and inventiveness of man's efforts to survive. The task of the writer consists in compressing this wealth into a sort of clarity without destroying its life-giving meaning. One should aim, as Alberti states in Della Famiglia, for a "rich brevity", a (brevita pregna).[33]

Perhaps Alberti's finest analogy is to see his writings as a form of "concentrated juice" a concept that incorporates the theme of reduction, preservation, as well as nourishment for the future.

> That of which I speak will be like concentrated juice, expressing all future and all past reasonings. [De Iciarchia] [34]

Given the great influx of new texts that characterized the early Renaissance, Alberti's thoughts were a call for moderation. He recognized that one of the most perplexing problems that he and his contemporaries faced was the wealth of source material, the obscurity of its origins, as well as the need to amalgamate and present it in a manner that still yields a coherent picture.

In pointing to this dilemma, Alberti's literary theory is probably the first Renaissance theory to deal directly

with the problem of eclecticism; he recognized it as bothersome and inescapable, yet essential to the definition of the new authorial task that has, in a state of crisis, to focus on the parallels between the survival of literature and the survival of society itself.

All of the concepts discussed up till now, intact wisdom, clarity, discursive pleasure, and rich brevity are subsumed in one of Alberti's most remarkable images, that of the temple and the mosaic. At the beginning of Book III of Profugiorum, Alberti embarks upon this extended metaphor which is in essence the guiding principle of his literary practice, and by means of which he explains that the task of the modern writer is different from that of the ancients.

Alberti argues that the ancient literary edifice was constructed in a manner similar to the construction of the temple of Ephesus, "that the whole of Asia built in not less than seven hundred years."[35] The continual effort of many over several centuries culminated in a grand and sumptuous temple of culture.

Alberti then explains that a later architect, observing the bare floor, declared the pavement unworthy of the splendid ornaments that graced the rest of the structure. The solution of this architect, however, was very different from that of the original builders.

> In order to decorate the floor, he gathered up the tiny fragments of precious material that remained

> and arranged them according to color and shape to form various pictures. [Profugiorum] [36]

Alberti then argues that the modern writer should take as his model the man who made the mosaic floor, for he similarly quarries amid ancient works, reducing them to pieces in order to reassemble them according to new demands. It is, so he argues, an unavoidable necessity for the modern writer.

> We find these literary bits cited by so many, used and scattered in so many writings, that whoever wishes to discuss them has no choice but to collect and sort and assemble them in a manner both different from the others and appropriate to his own work, as if consciously imitating the man who made the mosaic floor. [Profugiorum] [37]

And so, in one of the most brilliant passages of Alberti's literary theory, he describes his own work as a literary mosaic, created not "by chance," but "all conforming to one design."

> Who could be so fastidious that he would not approve and praise the man who devoted his industry and diligence to such a carefully constructed work? Thus we, Agnolo, who see gathered by you what was scattered and wrong in other authors, and who heard so many various matters placed together, conjoined, inserted, and bordering each other --all corresponding to one tone, all equal to one level, all extended in one line, all conforming to one design-- we not only cannot desire more, nor merely approve and praise you, but we must owe you all the more gratitude and merit. [Profugiorum] [38]

It should be added that Alberti completes the mosaic metaphor by suggesting that it can be used in architectural practice. "Niccolo" relates that he created a study by employing pieces taken from a public building.

> I, in a way similar to that man [who invented the mosaic], wanted to adorn my small and private study (diversorium), so I took from that public and most noble building that which was suitable for my plans and dividing the parts into smaller parts I distributed them in the way I liked. [Profugiorum] [39]

The dilemma of having to establish new ground within a well-trodden textual tradition had always been under lively discussion. Even in the thirteenth century, for example, we already hear William of Conche state that modern authors are no longer inventors of new ideas, but inhabitors of a body of literature becoming increasingly larger.

> ...the moderns are more perspicacious than the ancients, but not wiser. The ancients only had their writings that they themselves composed, but we have all their writings, and, moreover, all those that were composed from the beginning up to our time. And so we perceive more, but do not know more... Whence we are dwarfs on the shoulders of a giant. [40]

Alberti, at times, seems to be striving to simulate a type of discursive continuity that is the essence of Williams' hermeneutics. "Nihil dictum quin prius dictum" Alberti warns in Profugiorum, a phrase itself taken from the Roman author Terence, and reinforced by the biblical cliché that there is nothing new under the sun [Eccle. 1:10].[41]

However, rather than pointing to the textual edifice as a source of intellectual pride and discursive stability, Alberti, very much unlike William, is skeptical about the success of the hermeneutical operation. William, who argues that "we are reporters and expositors of the ancients, not

the founders (inventores) of new things"[42] sounds much like a precursor of those Humanist literati, whom Alberti opposes.

The inundation with new codices and translations that characterized intellectual life of the time opened new paths on all sides and diverted attention from the needed investigation into the Discourse on the Good and Happy Life. Everything has been thrown into question. The epic struggle with the material of the past and the attempt to reconstruct the temple of literature has become diffused. Alberti's fear of the potential arbitrariness of intellectual pursuits and the resulting loss of focus is held at bay, but only barely so, by the hope that the activity of reassembly will itself constitute an active force.

The mosaic metaphor is the methodological tool of the writer but in itself not determinative of the text's structure. It seems that for Alberti textual construction can take two different forms. In the dialogue Fatum et Fortuna in which Alberti identifies himself as a "winged god," who constructs rafts "which are of great help to swimmers,"[43] we are told that there are two different classes of such gods. One constructs new rafts of the GOOD ARTS for those who swim. The other, slightly lower, but equally effective, does not invent new rafts, but considers it a noble deed to gather planks and flotsam from the rocks and the opposing bank and construct rafts from them. Both groups deserve our thanks.

> Thereafter they place these constructs in the midst of the other swimmers. Therefore, grant to these

> men the honors and thanks they are due. [Fatum et Fortuna] [44]

The two classes of winged gods represent two different creative endeavors. One is that of great thinkers who give to life important new constructs. But their rafts become quickly shattered and fragmented and it is up to a different class of men to perpetuate the process of cultural survival. They do not invent ex nihilo like the great thinkers, but reconstruct rafts with pieces from the old. It is a legitimate endeavor even if of a somewhat lower order.

In this dream Alberti suggests that the production of theory takes two different forms, both equally important. It is certainly no coincidence that each is exemplified by the treatises De re aedificatoria and De pictura respectively. To link the two treatises as if they were of equal purpose would be to destroy this all-important distinction.

De re aedificatoria is written by a "demi-god," so to speak, a deity none the less, but one who makes no claims to have the genius to invent new things but only the determination to make an invigorated reassembly of that which has been destroyed.

> The same reasons which induced me to begin this work [De re aedificatoria], pressed and encouraged me to proceed. It grieved me that so many noble and great instructions of ancient authors should be lost by the injury of time, so that scarce any but Vitruvius has escaped this general shipwreck, - a writer indeed of universal knowledge, but so maimed by age that in many places there are great chasms and many things imperfect in others.... The collecting together, rehearsing without meanness,

> reducing into a just manner, writing in an accurate style, and explaining perspicuously so many various matters, so unequal, so dispersed, and so remote from common use and knowledge required a greater genius and more learning than I can pretend to. [De re aedificatoria] [45]

Alberti starts with the Ten Books of Vitruvius as the given construction within which he has to work. The text is however in ruins, part of "the general shipwreck," the "naufragio." However, all the better, for now the writer is free to revitalize the construction as he sees fit.

Since the writing of this treatise can be compared to the reassembly of shipwrecked parts, De re aedificatoria figures relatively low in the hierarchy of Alberti's authorial pursuits. De pictura, however, is very different. "I was the first to write about this most subtle art."[46] With De pictura, as in Profugiorum and other writings Alberti is supplying "a new raft." As there is no pre-existing model, Alberti feels free to base the organization of De pictura on his image of the temple of literature which he describes in Profugiorum.

> Just as in the ancient temple,... the same happens among men of letters. The men of genius in Asia and especially in Greece invented all the arts and sciences over the centuries, and constructed in their writings a sort of temple as a residence for Athena and for Providence, the goddess of the Stoics. They raised the walls with their investigation of truth and falsehood, placed the columns by discerning and noting the effects and forces of nature, and to protect this great work from the buffets of adversity, they added a roof, which was the knowledge of avoidance of evil, desiring and attaining the good, hating vice, and seeking and loving virtue. [Profugiorum] [47]

The ancient temple of culture, consists of three elements. (1) the walls (an investigation into truth and falsehood); (2) the columns (responding to the effects of nature); and (3) the roof (representing morals). These three elements, reason, nature, and morals are the unmistakable categories of the three books of De pictura.

The first book, on the principles of perspective, stresses ratio as the foundation of the discussion.

> Let us search for the reasons (ratione) and start with the opinion of the philosophers.... [I, 5] [48]
>
> Anyone who has properly understood the theory (rationem) cannot doubt that some medium rays.... [I, 6] [49]
>
> We will explain the theory (rationem) behind this when we write about the demonstrations of painting.... [I, 19] [50]

The second book, after an introductory, rhetorical digression, discussed in a previous chapter, deals with the origins of painting in nature.

> We divide painting into three parts and this division we learn from Nature herself. [II, 30] [51]
>
> Nature demonstrates this very clearly. [II, 32] [52]
>
> I draw the breadth and length of the walls on the pavement, and in doing this I observed from nature that.... [II, 33] [53]
>
> By nature, we love things open and bright. [IV, 47] [54]

Book three opens with Alberti informing the reader about the importance of morals.

> But, in order that he may attain all these things, I would have the painter first of all be a good man. [III,52] [55]

The exhortations Alberti makes in these book appear in the following order.

- Be a good man.
- Be attentive to your morals.
- Be learned in all the liberal arts.
- Make yourself familiar with poets, and orators
- Follow the method of teachers in painting.
- Assiduously meditate upon Nature.
- Avoid the habit of following your own intelligence without the model of nature.
- Do not paint small panels.
- Take as a model a mediocre sculpture rather than an excellent painting.
- Combine diligence with speed of execution.
- Cultivate talent by industry, study and practice.
- Employ every care in your work.
- Do not despise public criticism
- Consult friends and chance spectators.

Profugiorum, in which Alberti claims to be writing something for the first time, is also divided in three Books, and here the same pattern holds true. The first book discusses the rationality inherent in the soul that can protect us from perturbations. The second assumes that we are already afflicted and discusses how the soul can protect itself from further difficulties and the last is a series of moral exhortations on how to keep our soul free to follow the dictates of virtue.

Whereas De re aedificatoria takes an existing structure of 10 Books, and modernizes the contents and the arguments according to the desire for clarity and textual pleasure, De pictura, and Profugiorum are modeled on the far simpler and more programmatic divisions Alberti claims to envision in

ancient literary investigations. In these texts he claims to be working from the ground up thereby asserting the vitality of the present.

The past, reduced to a heap of fragments, has no meaning *in toto* and thus can be quarried judiciously for that which has significance for the present. In those fields, like architecture, in which a residual form was yet discernable, the writer had to first inhabit the ruins, so to speak. In painting, however, which Alberti claims was never given a theoretical form, the author had an opportunity to build an edifice in a single moment which could simulate a temple built over a long period of time. The Albertian author, motivated by the operative urgency of the endangered present, must in one anguished life time, condense what the ancients had spent long centuries in completing.

Unlike revivalists, whether Scholastic, or Humanistic, Alberti is, in none of his writings, concerned with the intentions of the authors from whose works he quotes. In disregard of the Petrarchian thesis that the writer respect the intentions of the ancients, Alberti ignores their theoretical positions.[56] For example, his quotings and paraphrasings from Cicero and Quintilian in *De Pictura* give no indication that he was attempting to forward an interpretation of their thought, despite the fact that the treatises of both these authors were at the time well-known and intact. Alberti acts as if they were still in a ruined state, and the actual

intentions and philosophical arguments of the respective authors a mystery. All that can be gleaned from them are isolated sentences waiting to be reinserted into a new literary context.

It is even likely that Alberti exaggerated the bad condition of Vitruvius' manuscript which he claims was "so maimed by age, that in many places there are great chasms and many things imperfect in other places."[57] The ruined condition of this text was for Alberti not a lamentable fact; rather it was a fortuitous circumstance, if even true, that entitled him to relegate Vitruvius into the de-individualized realm of the history of ideas.

Since the past was interpreted as fragmented and anonymous, the author could even invent references, as Alberti does in De pictura and Profugiorum.[58] Because the repertoire of quotes has little connection with its original context anyway there is no harm done in Alberti's eyes. Alberti's inventiveness in this respect did not go uncritcized by his contemporaries. Leonardo Dati, for instance, wrote to Alberti, who had asked him to review the manuscript form of Della Famiglia, that the employment of quotes was not in accordance with scholarly form. Dati mistook intent for omission.

> You have quoted the examples and opinions of other authors without mentioning their names, almost as if you had not read their works, or were inventing the quotations and leaving a blank. [59]

The modern literary task, according to Alberti, is to produce the Discourse on the Good and Happy Life and not to establish a true intellectual continuity with the ancient authors. The hoped for vitality of the present, if it can be called back into life, depends not so much on an identity with the historical past, but rather on a projection of a supposedly intact future in one's imagination.

The only theoretical importance inherent in the ancient texts derives from the circumstance that they are evidence of a time when the relationship between the writer and the audience was functioning. The effort to construct a temple of culture had once been universal and honorably acknowledged. It took place over a protracted period of time. Consequently, the thoughts of the ancients had a validity that no contemporary writing can have. They were formulated without the cloud of duress and anxiety that hangs over the contemporary writer who finds no support in society and who must effect his task under a temporal urgency unknown in ancient times, or so Alberti claims.

In conclusion, let us point out that the observations, which we have now made, cannot presently be fitted into a preexisting scholarly discourse on late medieval and early Renaissance hermeneutics. Thus it would be rash to make conclusions about Alberti's opinions unless this aspect of early fifteenth century thought were more thoroughly known. Though Alberti is not the to first write about the problem of

writing in an age so inimately conscious of and perplexed by incomplete textual authorities, his sponsorship of a critical eclecticism could very well constitute a foundation for a history of early Renaissance hermeneutics.

Alberti's writer does not inhabit the edifice of the ancients, nor does he rebuild or augment their work with the intent of bringing it to a rational completion. He is engaged in a different activity altogether. The writer can no longer aspire to total originality, nor can he strive for perfect completion. The ancients have in a sense robbed him of this privilege. However, the present, in a compensatory assertion of its urgency, has orphaned ancient texts into a formalized anonymity. Rarely does Alberti reveal the sources of his quotes, condensing them into one discursive line, which makes the text all the more powerful. By means of the re-organization of ancient thought the new text can function as a type of impregnable compression of human wisdom. The text, born out of a new necessity leads into the future by incorporating into itself the judiciously chosen fragments of the past. It stands between the past and the future, a weak link in a precarious present, which must, nevertheless, assert itself in a last heroic effort to keep its own products from falling into the Valley of the Forgotten.

The struggle is an epic one. Like Homer's Ulysses, who shares much with Baptista, the Albertian author has to negotiate his way through the labyrinthine territory of liter-

ature, collecting the pieces for his mosaic, inventing pieces if need be. He has to hazard the ridicule and envy of the academicians and the misunderstanding of the unlearned. He cannot get lost in the soft mud of erudition nor the lofty flights of learning, but must maintain a steady course despite public torments and private anxieties. He must be able to forage into the Valley of Forgotten Things and re-emerge all the wiser to hand over the Discourse on the Good and Happy Life even if there is no audience. He is driven by his own messianic urgency which gives him the necessary propulsion to overcome and combat all obstacles. Only the invulnerable Baptista, the veritable concience of his time, can perform the duty that once was in the hands of many.

CONCLUSION

I hope I have sufficiently mapped out the ontological configuration that explains, for Alberti, both the meaning of the text and the drama of authorship. His intent was not so much to define man, or for that matter to establish a new Humanist culture, but to study the epic and timeless struggle of society for survival. The faultline along which Alberti visualizes the subterranean conflicts within society is the deteriorated author-audience relationship. It had once been fruitful, but is now beset by uncertainties. There exists a vicious circle of distrust between leaders and masses, between educated and uneducated, and even among the learned themselves. Under these new and more difficult circumstances, a new type of author was called for. The ideal of Ciceronian communication was no longer applicable. It had served, so Alberti thought, a healthy society.

The Albertian author has to approach his task obliquely and always from outside of the establishment which does not want his interference. There are three possible routes. In one instance, the Albertian "Humanist" is forced into exile, a condition which suits him well, as it reinforces and

legitimizes his claim of disinterestedness. However, should he choose to function from within society, he must assume a deliberate and public stance of internal exile as vagabond. In this case he fulfills his role by being an irritant, a gadfly. The ultimate goal, however, is to restore the author to his rightful position as myth giver. Thus Alberti envisions an author who choses to function from within society, projecting himself into a savior role. All three, in their own and different ways, are cogniscant of their status as unappreciated guardians of society's values.

Unlike the historiography of Bruni and the early Humanists, who argued that society was dependent on great and powerful politicians and warriors, Alberti's historiography depends on the intangible and anonymous power of a different type of great man. His historical importance derives from his self-identification with society's missing center of gravity. History, for Alberti, is nothing but the epic and tedious struggle of society continually losing and regaining its life giving forces.

The three types of Albertian authors, represented in the figures of Theogenius, Momo, and Baptista, are rendered in many intermediary stages, each exploring various theoretical possibilities; all are clearly experimental. There is the young "Alberti," still unformed. He becomes either Baptista, the mythical precocious hero, or the artist, grown up but totally dependent on the beneficence of society and on

the prince in particular. There are the young writers, Philoponius and Leopis, who become either the bulwark of social continuity or the proponents of a vision of doom. There is the metaphor of the "family" pointing to latent forces of social continuity. It is not so much an anthropological proposition, as a metaphorical one. The family is a family of choice, centered in particular around Virtue and Apollo.

There is Libripeta, the representative of the myth of disillusionment, a swaggering victim of the paralysis evil exercises on creativity. He confronts "Alberti" who must either ignore Libripeta like the artist, or incorporate his bitter knowledge into his suffering to prove himself sanctified and uncontaminated. This was the role assigned to Baptista. There is the death of the "father", which can either force the youthful writer to take control of his literary mission or propel him toward disillusionment in anticipation of the death of all of society.

There is the wise prince who sponsors the architect much as Paleterus sponsors Philoponius. And there is Momo, disillusioned and embittered; his efforts to reintroduce the tabella into society have failed. Baptista, however, successfully delivers the Discourse on the Good and Happy Life to the painters. His text can only be born out of the illusion of a society reformulated according to the myth created by the writer.

Alberti did not envision a new 'renaissance' society superseding the defunct Middle Ages. Contemporary society, for Alberti, is inevitably 'medieval.' There exists little possibility for change. At best the "Humanists" should attempt to create a new myth to prevent society from internalizing its own hopelessness. The Albertian authors, the characters in this new myth and themselves the exponents of it, hand over to society the identity that was denied them in the form of their writings. Their writings constitute a treaty between nature and society. Baptista's "aesthetic" treatises are prime examples of such authoritative texts. On the one hand, they preserve and neutralize the thoughts and knowledge of the past and make them accessible, while on the other hand, they constitute a pact with the future.

In that process of self-projection which is at the heart of his work, Leon Baptista Alberti confronts the act of writing as the central challenge. Like an Homeric journeyman, Alberti's "author" has to negotiate his way through the labyrinthine territory of the Land of Forgotten Things, collecting disparate pieces and reassembling them to form them into a new synthesis. The learned and the unlearned, contaminated by one vice or the other, flank the route and hope to thwart him, but he must remain sovereign. He must avoid the pitfalls of eruditicn and must stoically maintain a steady course, overcoming internal torments and anxieties.

The treatises on painting and architecture condense, absorb, and dispatch the past, and hopefully activate the regenerative instict of society in the mind of the young. They do not argue for a revival of ancient customs or thought, but appeal to imagination and fantasy. This alone guarantees that the texts that bond society together can remain authentic and permanent. They are not so much blueprints for action as a vision of an impossible alchemical transformation of substance.

LEON BAPTISTA ALBERTI

HIS PHILOSOPHY OF CULTURAL CRITICISM

FOOTNOTES

Note: Primary source material will appear in a shortened form.

FOOTNOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

1. Joan Gadol. Leon Battista Alberti: Universal Man of the Early Renaissance. Chicago: University of Chicago Poress, 1969, p. 95.

2. Heiner Mühlmann, L. B. Alberti: Aesthetische Theorie der Renaissance, Bohn: Rudolf Habelt Verlag, 1982.

3. David Marsh cites approvingly the statement in Una visione estetica (p. 135) by Giovanni Santinello, who "complains that the uncontrolled torrent of precepts and examples in Alberti's middle dialogues - Libri della Famiglia IV, Theogenius and Profugiorum - seems designed to bore the reader." (David Marsh. The Quattrocento Dialogue. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980, p. 131 ft. 18.

4. David Marsh, The Quattrocento Dialogue. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980, p. 93

> The implication of artistic creation betrays Alberti's attempt to compensate for the derivative nature of his dialogues by invoking an artistic novelty like that which he confidently proclaims in his De pictura (1435-1436). Although Alberti sees little possibility of originality in his moral writings and frequently cites the Terentian dictum that all has been said before, he nevertheless recognizes the novelty of Quattrocento achievements in the visual arts.

Once again the art historians are allowed to have their way. Marsh ignores the fact that in a number of Alberti's "derivative" writings he claims originality, a circumstance that should at least be explored.

5. Eugenio Garin, "Il pensiero di L. B. Alberti nella cultura del Rinascimento," Accademia Nazionale dei Linei. Vol. 209: 1974, pp. 21 - 41.

6. Ibid: p. 21 -22.

7. Ibid: p. 22.

8. Ibid: p. 23.

9. E. Garin, "Il pensiero di L. B. Alberti: caratteri e contrasti," Rinascimento. Vol. 12: 1972, p. 18.

10. Lorenzo Begliomini, "Note sull'opera dell'Alberti: il 'Momus' e il 'De re aedificatoria'," Rinascimento. Vol. 12: 1972, pp. 267 - 283.

Begliomini argues that in contrast to the pair De re aedificatoria and Della Famiglia, there are those works by Alberti that are less controlled. "It seems that at certain moments he [Alberti] feels it necessary to experience liberty, to give vent to his feelings... (p. 268)." "The problem of an Alberti 'of two faces della doppia faccia,'" so he holds, "is inevitable (p. 267)." Though Begliomini asks, "How can they be harmonized?" it is clear that once one begins with an artificial distinction, not proved by Alberti's own statements, questions as to a "harmony" are equally misleading.

11. Franco Borsi, Leon Battista Alberti. Milano: Electa Editrice, 1975.

> 'L'aura' nobilissima, lo schermo dialettico, le dotte citazioni, l'intento pedagogico caratteristiche communi a tutta l'opera albertiana e non solo a quella, -perché i riferimenti alla cultura contemporanea sono stretti e molteplici, - non possono elimiare un dubbio di fondo. E cioè, che al di là di tutto questo che ha dato origine all monumentalità dell'Alberti e al suo cliché di uomo universale, fossero in fondo presenti una sostanziale dilacerazione, una sottile angoscia, una vena di pessimismo nella ormai constatata frattura tra cultura e realtà; una frattura ora conscientemente approfondita sul piano di una dolce evasione che prefigura i vantaggi, la commoditas, delle lettere, rispetto ai condizionamenti della realtà; ora invece tentata di superare o suturare attroverso tentativi di impegno concreto, di pratiche risoluzioni. (p. 7)

12. Joan Gadol in her book Leon Battista Alberti: Universal Man of the Early Renaissance. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969, p. 19.) argues correctly that "no single work can serve to characterize in full the nature of his thought; and no single work can serve to characterize in full the nature of his thought." Yet her practically

exclusive focus on his aesthetics counters her very intent. A discussion of what she calls Alberti's "humanistic" writings appears only in the last chapter, and is treated quite summarily.

13. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 42.

> Tu semper aut gerendis negociis aut in litterarum cognitione versaris. Ego autem qui me totum tradidi litteris, ceteris posthabitis rebus, omnia posse libentius debeo quam diem aliquam nihil aut lectitando aut commentando preterire. [De commodis]
>
> You [Carlo, Alberti's brother] besides literature always found time for business. I however, dedicated myself completely to writing, leaving aside everything else. I prefer, in fact, to neglect all other things than to let a day pass without reading and writing.

14. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 44.

> Nam prestantius sic esse recte opinantur ii qui laudem cupiant, quippiam etsi non omni exparte perfectum atque absolutum conari, quam in litteris silentio consenescere. [De commodis]
>
> Thus he who desires fame rightly believes that it is more excellent to try something no matter how imperfect and incomplete rather than to wind up old and unknown in literature.

15. Intellectual historians tend to agree about the conflation of rhetoric and politics in the Renaissance, but are divided as to its causes. Some have argued, as Victoria Kahn points out in her book Rhetoric, Prudence, and Skepticism in the Renaissance (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985, p. 38) that the rhetorical definition of literature was influenced by the early Italian Humanists' experience of the political force of their own literary activity, as when Giangaleazzo Visconti is reported to have said that he feared Salutati's letters more than a thousand horsemen. Others have suggested to the contrary that this conflation was owing in part to a more developed sense of the limited possibilites for genuine political action, with the resulting defensive argument that instead of being preparatoy to the action of persuasion in the forum or the law court, literature was itself seen as an act of persuasion. It is not the purpose of this paper to explore the

rise of this phenomenon among the Humanists, but only to explore it in Alberti's own literary theory.

16. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 159.

17. Historians of philosophy have tended to draw a clear distinction between the philosophical and Humanistic enterprises of the Quattrocento. Paul Oskar Kristeller, in particular, argues for a strict separation of the two. He views "Humanism" primarily as a scholarly activity in the liberal arts, and philosophy as the systematic exposition and presentation of systems of thought. Consequently, he desribes Alberti's thoughts as "amateurish" and thus not worthy of serious philosophic analysis. (Renaissance Thought and its Sources, New York: Columbia University Press, 1979 p. 28.) Charles Trinkaus, in his book In Our Image and Likeness (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1970, p. xvi), attempts a more tempered approach to Humanist thought. Nevertheless he "regrets" the purposeful ommision of Alberti in his voluminous investigation of Renaissance moral philosophy. Finally Monroe Beardsley, the historian of philosophy, takes the art historians to task on their home territory. He holds that in the Renaissance "there was no great philosopher to turn his mind to the problem of aesthetics, and no great thinker to make a systematic contribution to its progress."Aesthetics from Classical Greece to the Present (University of Alabama Press: 1966 p.) He does of course recognize the importance of Alberti, but questions the values of his thought in the history of ideas.

18. Monroe C. Beardsley in Aesthetics from Classical Greece to the Present (University of Alabama Press: 1966) summarizes an opinion frequently encountered in literature on Alberti's aesthetic treatises.

> What is perhaps most impressive (and what was fresh) about these works is their remarkable combination (so anticipatory of the spirit of Galileo) of careful empirical inquiry with systematic interest in theory. (p. 121)

An example of the idealism inherent in Albertian studies is Joan Gadol's L.B. Alberti: Universal Man of the Early Renaissance (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969). The philosophical angle with which she approaches her study is that of Cassirer and post-Kantian idealism. With Cassirer in particular she attempts to show Alberti as a precursor for the modern "liberal" spirit.

19. According to Cecil Grayson, for example, Alberti wrote *De pictura* "out of his own experience as a painter and as an observer of Nature, and in part from the study of art, history, literature and mathematics." (C. Grayson, *On Painting and On Sculpture*, London, Phaidon Press, 1972: p. 8.) By portraying Alberti in the clean terms of empirical realism we by-pass the all-important question of authorial posing.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 147.

> Dicono che all'uomo savio la conscienza sua è un grande celeberrimo teatro. [Profugiorum]

2. L.B. Alberti, Commentarium Philodoxeos Fabule, published in the article "Philodoxeos Fabula, Edizione critica a cura di Lucia Cesarini Martinelli," in Rinascimento, Vol. 17, 1977: p. 144- 147.

> Tamen, ne meas lucubrationes perderem, adieci prohemium in quo et studia et etatem et reliqua hec de me omnia aspersa esse volui, ut, siquando libuisset, nostram liquido esse - quod fecimus - vindicaremus.

As Alberti states he sprinkled autobiographic allusions into the play so that at a later date he could claim the play as his own, something which he then proceeded to do by means of this Commentarium written in 1434, ten years after the play was published anonymously. Though the Commentarium deals only with this particular play, Alberti's remarks reveal much about his literary method.

3. L.B. Alberti, Philodoxeos Fabule, published in the article "Philodoxeos Fabula, Edizione critica a cura di Lucia Cesarini Martinelli," in Rinascimento, Vol. 17, 1977: p. 144-147.

4. L. C. Martinelli, "Philodoxeos Fabula," (Rinascimento, No. 17, 1977: p. 111 - 234).

> ..; tum et ea eloquentia est, quam in hunc usque diem docti Latinis litteris omnes approbarint atque usque adeo esse antiqui alicuius sciptoris existimarint, ut fuerit nemo qui non hanc ipsam summa cum admiratione perlegerit, multi memorie mandarint, non pauci in ea sepius exscribenda plurimum opere consumpserint.... Quam ego fabulam cum eo placere et passim a studiosi expeti, quo vetusta putaretur, intelligerem, rogantibus unde illam congessissemus per commentum persuasimus ex vetustissimo illam esse codice excerptam. Facile

omnes adsentiri: nam et comicum dicendi genus et priscum quippiam redolebat neque difficile creditu erat adolescentem pontificiis scriptis occupatum me ab omni eloquentie laude abhorrere. (p. 146)

5. H. Mancini, Opera inedita et pauca separatim impressa di Leon Battista Alberti, Florence, J. C. Sansoni, 1890, pp. 122-224. Some of the dialogues have been published as separate pieces, such as Defunctus, published and translated into Italian by G. Farris in De commodis litterarum atque incommodis e Defunctus (Milano: Marzorati, 1971.) The only English translations are of Religio, Virtus, and Fatum et Fotuna: "The Italian Philosophers, Selected Readings From Petrarch to Bruno," in Renaissance Philosophy, Vol. 1 Edited and Translated by Arturo Fallicio and Herman Shapiro (New York: The Modern Library, 1967, pp. 27 - 39).

Intercoenales I

Epistola dedicatoria ad Paulum Toscanellum Book 1		
Book 1	Scriptor	dialogue
	Pupillus	character description
	Religio	dialogue
	Virtus	dialogue
	Fatum et Fortuna	dream
	Patientia	dialogue
	Felicitas	moralistic story
Book 2	Oraculum	act
	Parsimonia	dialogue
	Gallus	fable
	Vaticinium	act
	Paupertas	dialogue
	Nummus	story
	Pluto	fable
	Divitiae	
Book 4	Defunctus	dialogue-dream
Book 5(?)	Anuli	dialogue

6. The other collection has only recently been discovered and published by E. Garin: "Intercenali Inedite," Rinascimento, Vol. 12, 1965. It has not yet been shown whether the two collections originally belonged together, though it is likely that they do. For the sake of clarity I have labeled the two collections I and II.

Intercoenales II

Book 3	Prohemium ad Leonardum Arretinum	
	Picture	desciption
	Flores	fable
	Discordia	dialogue

	Hostis	story
	Lapides	fable
	Hedera	fable
	Suspitio	dialogue
Book 4	Prohemium ad Poggium	
	Somnium	dialogue-dream
	Corolle	act
	Cynicus	act
	Fama	dialogue
	Erumna	dialogue
	Servus	dialogue
Book 7	Prohemium	
	Maritus	story
Book 8	Prohemium	
	Fatum et pater infelix	story
	Convelata	story
Book 9	Naufragus	story
Book 10	Prohemium	
	Bubo	fable
	Pertinacia	fable
	Nebule	fable
	Templum	fable
	Lacus	fable
	Lupus	fable
	Aranea	story
Book 11	Vidua	story
	Amores	story

7. Garin is one of those few who have taken a special interest in these works. He argues that they reflect Alberti's "anguish," and that they are almost "contemporary," reflecting "a bitterness, at times morose and almost desperate." (E. Garin, Portraits from the Quattrocento, Harper and Rowe, N.Y.:p. 120.) Garin's attempt to project a modern "Angst" onto Alberti is, so I hold, an exaggeration. As I point out, Alberti's interlocutors cannot be taken as literal expressions. Apart from Garin's bold attempt to crack the mystique of Alberti, there are only a few studies of this all-important work. One is David Marsh's "Alberti as Satirist," Rinascimento, Vol. 23, 1983: p. 198-212.

8. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 125.

> LEOPIS: Ego quidem apud meos libellos occupatus enitebar aliquam de me famam proseminare literis. [Scriptor]

Alberti seems to have imitated Lucian's employment of "Lycinus" as an interlocutor in his own invention of "Leopis" and "Lepidus," which ressemble Alberti's assumed name Leo.

See David Marsh, "Alberti as Satirist," Rinascimento, Vol. 23, 1983: p. 202.

9. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 125.

10. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 125.

LIBRIPETA: Ah! ah! eh! ridiculum hominem! isthoc ne tu in agro etrusco id tentas, qui quidem tam undique opertus est caligine omnis ignorantiae, cujus et omnis humor est ponitus absumptus aestu ambitionum et cupiditatum, quemve qui colunt multo in dies impetu invidiae perturbantur. [Scriptor]

11. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 125.

LIBRIPETA:...; nam est quidem ad vituperandum pervigil et admodum severus censor vulgus,.... [Scriptor]

12. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 125.

LEOPIS: O literatorum alumne. LIBRIPETA: ...; imprimisque metue ipsum me ad quem plus accessit auctoritatis, quam palam omnibus detraxerim, quam si per quam multos collaudassem. [Scriptor]

13. E. Garin, Intercenali Inedite: pp. 25-29.

14. E. Garin, Intercenali Inedite: pp. 25.

15. E. Garin, Intercenali Inedite: pp. 27.

16. E. Garin, Intercenali Inedite: pp. 28-29.

LIBRIPETA: Egi gratias atque ut primum in adversa ripa constiti, intueor prata quedam amplissima, ubi pro cespite atque foliis herbarum surgebant

come barbeque hominum, capillique mulierum, atque crines iumentorum; nec non et iube leonum, ut eiusmodi pilis nihil posset in prat non opertum conspici. Enim vero, superi boni, quantum illic numerum somniantum perspexi, nescio quas radiculas effodientes, quas qui edunt et vafri et docti cum minime sint / videntur. Multum illic consumpsi operam. Sed me ignes copia pediculorum, que ex prato convolabat, pene exedit, ut soa fuga salus mihi petenda. Iccirco conieci me in pedes, atque unde sese mihi exitus obtulit, inde me vesanum tanta ex peste eripuerim, fata hanc nobis cloacam prebuere. [Somnium]

Giovanni Ponte in his article "Lepidus e Libripeta" (Rinascimento, Vol. 12: 1972, pp. 237 - 266) argues that Libripeta is Niccolò Niccoli, the noted Humanist, who was the center of numerous invective battles. Indeed there are many similarities, as Ponte points out. Libripeta, who appears in several dialogues, is a learned scholar, cynic, and bibliophile. However, Libripeta is rigorously anti-religious, as this quote demonstrates. Niccoli, by contrast, was known for his piousness. Libripeta, though partially inspired by the figure of Niccoli, represents more than a real life person, but an authorial stance that Alberti himself creates for his literary ontology.

17. E. Garin, Intercenali Inedite: pp. 29.

LEPIDUS: I ergo iam nunc, atque te lotum redde. Ego ad meos quos tu dictitas insanos et indoctus, redibo. [Somnium]

18. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 129.

19. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 130.

LIBRIPETA: Tu ni te ipsum multis vigiliis lectitans conficeres, Leopide, haud palleres, minimeque esses erudus:.... [Religio]

20. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 130.

LIBRIPETA: Vetustum quidem est homines malis obrui, at vero si quis alius, aut fatum, aut fors, aut tempus efficit ut malis angamur, procul dubio

non invitis diis idem suo libere utetur officio, vestrasque, o religiosi, jejunas precationes aspernabitur. Praeterea an tu deao nobis homunculis persimiles arbitraris? Ut veluti imprudentes atque incauti homines extemplo consilium captent, atque item extemplo pristina consilia muttent? Profecto in tanta rerum administratione nihil esse diis laboriosius audio ab his qui literas profitentur; deos ordine paene aeterno orbem angere. [Religio]

21. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 130.

LEOPIS: Quae abs te dicta sunt, Libripeta, in disputationis locum ita accipio ut apud me tamen semper haec mens et opinio sit de diis, ut censeam preces bonorum et vota euperis esse non ingrata. [Religio]

22. Ibid.

23. E.Garin, Intercenali Inedite: pp. 28.

... tua omni ex maxima bibliotheca, quam acclusam detines,....[Somnium]

Libripeta as a scholar will be discussed in a later chapter.

24. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 166-171.

25. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 167.

26. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 166.

Tibi quidem affectissimi et plane te boni viri plerique, cum norint, qua sim fide et benevolentia erga te praeditus, jussere hanc provinciam, in qua mihi esset cause honoris tui commendata, susciperem, atque id munus quidem eo sum audentius aggressus, quo te semper esse ingenio praeditum modestissimo memini, ut quae a me pro tua laude

augenda et amplificanda requirantur, ea te som ingrato esse animo laturum existimem. [Paupertas]

27. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. xx-xx.

28. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 228.

"O hominum, inquit, prudentissime, o justissime, o felicissime Neophrone, quanti te in vita fecisse decuit, cujus memoriam non paribus, sed meritis laudibus concelebramus?... Oh! virtutem egregiam,...." [Defunctus]

29. Ibid. p. 204.

30. Ibid. p. 228.

31. Ibid. p. 237.

32. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 126-129.

33. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 127.

... qui sese ob meritum literarum ditioribus praeferri euperet;.... [Pupillus]

34. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 126.

Erat istiusmodi fortuna adolescenti gravis quidem, sed illud longo gravius quod impissimi adolescentis affines summopere elaborabant,... [Pupillus]

35. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 126.

Nam is relictus puer, patre defuncto, sine affinibus non modo bonis omnibus paternis spoliatus, sed etiam a domestica suorum familiaritate et convictu exclusus atque omnie ita abjectu fuit, ut apud extraneos sibi esset mendicandam. [Pupillus]

36. Ibid.

37. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 274.

Dirà quello da' suoi piccini nati in casa babbo: "costui è mio figliuolo". E io dirò: "vero, ma tu lo facesti simile agli altri animali nati con due piedi, io lo feci simile per virtù a uno dio terrestre." Voi giovani, a chi diresti che costui così ornato da me fusse più obligato, al babbo o a me vero e ottimo padre? [De Iciarchia]

38. W.D. Ross, "Rhetorica," The Works of Aristotle. Oxford, 1946: p. 1367b.

39. Ibid.

40. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. I: p. 132.

Pertanto troppo mi piace la sentenza d'Aristotile, el quale constitui l'uomo esser quasi come un mortale iddio felice, intendendo e faccendo con ragione e virtù. [Della Famiglia]

41. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 151 - 154.

42. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 151.

PHILARGIRUS: Oro, Apollo, fave: hoc plaustrum rusticanis instrumentis onustum dono affero. Divitem me esse affecto.
APOLLO: Interdiu omne id ferramentorum genus defodiens habeto. Vespere tamquam in speculo ipsum te in illis conspectato.
PHILARGIRUS: Hos ego semper labores fugiendos duxi.
APOLLO: Nullum ergo dedecus vereare.
PROCER: Oro, Apollo, fave: has gemmas atque nummos dono affero. Invidiam metuo.
APOLLO: Eas tu pecunias inter bonos distribuito.
PROCER: Non novi.
APOLLO: Plusquam duo te una spectent oculi eaveto.
PROCER: Haud quidem licet
APOLLO: Da operam ut plures tibi similes absint.
PROCER: Durum.
APOLLO: Ergo ne metue invidiam. [Oraculum]

43. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 152.

LIBRIPETA: O Apollo fave. Hos libros dono affer. Aveo videri literatus.
APOLLO: Sis, atqui ut sis noctesque diesque assidue lectitato. Quam ob rem te laudent praebeto; id cum desit, multos ipso collaudato.
LIBRIPETA: Taedet, longeque malo videri quam esse.
APOLLO: Omnium ergo literatorum obtrectator esto. [Apollo]

LIBRIPETA: O Apollo, grant my request, I bring these tomes to you as a gift. I long to be learned.
APOLLO: That you can do, but in order actually to be learned you must spend nights and days in diligent study. Give men a reason to praise you. And even when they give you none, praise them.
LIBRIPETA: But that is all too tedious. It is easier to appear learned than to actually be learned.
APOLLO: So become a critic.

44. H. Mancini, Opera Inedita: p. 154

PENUS: O Apollo fave. Quandoquidem nihil habeo proeterea quae dono dedam; Apollo tuae sunt partes efficere ut possim re multo plura afferre quam ipse modo pollicear. Si tu me divitem feceris, tripodes argenteos, candelabra aurea, atque smaragdis onusta dono afferam. Quid respondes?

Apollo obmutuit! Ipsi quoque dii nos egenos adeo spernunt! At unum hoc iterum atque iterum precor, obtestorque, Apollo, gratis datam nequeo paupertatem ferre.

APOLLO:Eam tu arbori, infelicissime, suspendito. [Oraculum]

POORMAN: O Apollo, grant my request, although I have nothing to bring you but a promise. For it is your power to enable me to bring even more than I could promise. If you will make me rich, I will give you silver tripods and golden candelsticks studded with emeralds. Well, what is your response? Apollo has grown silent; do the gods spurn poor men. Please Apollo, grant me this one thing, I beg and beseech you. Though you will not answer, I cannot endure the poverty you gave me free of charge.

APOLLO: Wretch! Hang yourself from a tree.

45. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 158-166.

46. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 166.

47. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 151.

PHILARGIRUS: Demiror Apollinem istunc marmoreum quem circum vulgus ille hominum astat, a pristina, primaevaque sua benignitate, atque liberalitate degenerasse; qui enim egenis pariter atque divitibus gratis responsa reddere consueverat, idem nunc nisi praemio accepto non loquitur. [Oraculum]

48. Eckard Kessler, Das Problem des Fruehen Humanismus, Muenchen, 1968: p. 114.

49. Ibid, p. 146 ff.

50. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 132-36.

It should also be noted that Alberti here portrays Virtue as one individual as opposed to the six Cardinal Virtues of Christian theology. The image of one Virtue was always held out in the Middle Ages as pagan. Filarete gives himself credit for having been the first to re-establish a unified goddess of Virtue, whom he takes as a model for his own life (Filarete means "Lover of Virtue"). However, it seems that Alberti may have preempted him, for Intercoenales was written in the late fourteen-twenties. See E.F. Rice (Ed.), Medieval and Renaissance Studies of T.E. Mommsen, Ithaca, 1959: p. 176. Mommsen, however, makes no mention of Alberti's dialogue. See also G. Sasso, "Qualche osservazione sul problema della virtù e della fortuna nell'Alberti", Il Mulino, II, 1953, pp. 600-618; Howard R. Patch, The Goddess Fortuna in Medieval Literature, Cambridge, 1927.

51. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 133 - 134.

Idcirco Plato philosophus contra nonuula de deorum officiis cepit disputare. At illa excandescene: Apage te hinc verbose, inquit, non enim decet servos deorum causuuam suscipere. Ceperat et Cicero orator plura velle suadere, at exturba armatorum erupit Marcus Antonius praepotens latera illa sua digladiatoria ostentans, gravissimumque puguum in os Ciceronis injecit: hinc ceteri amici mei perculsi metu fugam sibi propere consuluere: neque Polycletus peniculo, aut Phidias scalpro, aut Archimedes oroscopo, aut reliqui inermes adversus audicissimos armatos, eosdemque praedis atque homicidiis et assuetos bello ad sese tuendos valebant. [Virtus]

52. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 134.

53. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 135.

Ego et nuda et despecta excludor. [Virtus]

54. This piece has had an unusual history as it was known only until recently that it was authored by Alberti. See E. Garin, "Il pensiero di L.B. Alberti nella Cultura del Rinascimento," Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, No. 209, Rome, 1974 p. 28.

55. Adoparsi is a long recognized concept in Alberti's thought. It incorporates cultural as well as moral activity. However, it is rarely pointed out that the term refers to a participation in the good. As Giannozzo explains in Della Famiglia, man is blessed with body, spirit and time, from birth. However, how man employs these elements is left open. He then draws an analogy with a river; if one uses its waters to clean oneself, one is making use of the entire mass of water. The river, we are told represents time, but it could also represent Virtue. Adoparsi brings one in contact with the universal power of Time and Virtue. (See. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 169 f.)

56. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 133.

57. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 133.

58. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 127.

> At Philoponus aegrotus, egenus, miser adolescene sibi jampridem induxerat animo haec omnia fortiter perpeti, ipsamque fortunam patientis, hominum vero nequitiam virtute et animi viribus benemerendo superare et vincere instituerat. [Pupillus]

59. The theme of the poor student, as Garin points out, was an old medieval commonplace. Some of the otherss are classical, taken in particular from Horace. However, instead of Horace's good natured irony we find a portrait of tragedy. See David Marsh "Alberti as Satirist" Rinascimento, Vol. 23, 1983: p. 200.

60. David Marsh, "Alberti as Satirist," Rinascimento, Vol. 23, 1983: p. 198-212.

61. Alberti's Profugiorum continues the long tradition of investigations into man's melancholia from Boethius' Philosophiae Consolationis to Petrarch's Secretum and De remediis utriusque fortunae Alberti admits that "many of our important Latin authors and many Greeks" wrote on similar subjects, (C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 160.) Though Alberti makes good use of these and other

works, he claims his approach to the subject is different. This issue will be discussed in a later chapter.

62. Regarding the absence of Baptista in the dialogues Alberti may have had Petrarch's Secretum in mind. In Petrarch's dialogue, which also is on psychic stress, Truth accompanies the disputants as a silent witness. For Petrach's Secretum, see Francisco Rico, Vida u orba de Petrarca: I. Lectura del "Secretum", (Padua: Editrice Antenore, 1974; Adelia Noferi, L'esperienza poetica del Petrarca (Florence: Sansoni, 1962), pp. 236-284; Francesco Tateo, Dialogo interiore e polemica ideologica nel "Secretum" del Petrarca (Florence: Sansoni, 1965), pp. 15-19.

63. Agnolo states that he will follow the example of Niccola, who "does not report his real opinions and judgements, but only attempts to lure" him into the discussion (p. 110). Such recantation devices were typical in Renaissance dialogues. For a discussion refer to: David Marsh, The Quattrocento Dialogue, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1980: p. 30 f.

64. David Marsh, The Quattrocento Dialogue, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1980: p. 5.

65. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 181.

66. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 182.

67. Alberti's tactic of gradually infiltrating a character is strikingly un-Ciceronian. The following statement by Cicero from the introductory letter to Academia is a good example of his insistence on maintaining the integrity of the interlocutors. Cicero describes how he has transformed an actual conversation with Varro into a dialogue in the conventional manner. He then outlines the specific position of the individual interlocutors.

> I have accordingly composed a dialogue, held between us at my place at Cumae, with Pomponius as

one of the party. I have cast you for the part of champion of Antiochus, whose doctrine I think I have understand you to approve of, while I have taken the role of Philo myself. When you read it I fancy you will be surprised at our holding a conversation that never took place; but you know the conventions as to dialogues. ("Academicus," The Loeb Classical Library: p. 407-9)

68. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 179.

69. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 108 - 109.

Voglio inferire che a Battista, qual sempre v'appella padre, e védevi e odevi con avidità e volentieri, e' vostri ragionamenti sarranno, come e' sono a me, [Niccola] accettissimi e gratissimi. [Profugiorum]

70. See F. Borsi's L.B. Alberti (Harper and Rowe: N.Y. 1975 p. 362). Dati was a close friend of Alberti and supported him financially especially towards the end of Alberti's life.

71. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 108.

NICCOLA: E riferiscovi quel ch'io intesi spesso da lui, che due soli uomini gli paiono ornamento della patria nostra, padri del senato e veri moderatori della repubblica: l'uno si è Giannozzo degli Alberti suo, uomo tale per certo quale e' lo espresse in quel suo terzo libro De Familia, buono uomo e umanissimo vecchio; l'altro siete voi [Agnolo], quale e' compari a Giannozzo in ogni lode. [Profugiorum]

72. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. I: p. 63.

... tutti e' mortali sono da essa natura compiuti ad amare e mantenere qualunque lodatissima virtù.

73. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 108.

74. E.Garin, Intercenali Inedite: pp. 46.

In this dialogue Erumna, Paleterus is not mentioned by name as the conversation partner of Philoponius. Yet the character and argument of the dialogue is so similar to Paupertas that such a link can be readily assumed.

75. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 175.

Avus meus Benedictus Albertus, eques florentinus, vir ob mores bonos, obque virtutem clarus, eum a seditiosis civibus pulsus in exilum vitae extremum diem apud Rhodum ageret,... [Divitiae]

76. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. I: p. 215.

...; e così constituendo il principe solete prendere argumento dall'api, le quali tutte a uno solo obediscono, e pella publica salute tutte con fortissimo animo e arentissima opera s'esser-citano, queste a mietere quella suprema calugine de' fiori, queste altre a suportare e condurre il peso, quelle a distribuirlo in opera, quelle altre a fabricare lo edificio, e tutte insieme a difendere le loro riposte ricchezze e delizie. [Della Famiglia]

77. E.Garin, Intercenali Inedite: pp. 46.

PHILOPONIUS: Nam cum sepe iam antea una tecum, vetere parentum nostrorum amico, quem ipse patris amantissimi loco habeo, de iniquitate meorum querebamur, quod in eis tanta esset insolentia et temeritas ut,....

I have often complained to you, my old family friend whom I consider like a father, about the injustices inflicted by my relatives.... [Erumna]

78. G. Mancici, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. 369.

Ti esorto ad imitare come fai l'avo il padre, uomini ragguardevoli ed illustri per le altre virtu e per la cognizione delle letere, affinchè la patria possa gloriarsi d'aver posseduto in una sola primaria famiglia tali cittadini insigni per

virtù e meriti ereditari verso la repubblica. [Trivia]

79. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 155.

PERIFRONUS:... At tu contra agendum: quid tu si peregre profieiscens complures haberes comites, utrumme praemitteres semper, si esset qui vobis ignotas vias primus omnium scrutari atqui obire, cauponemque, ut coenam sequentibus appararet, longe ante alios petere ac excitare posset, istiusmodine curis et solicitudinibus ipsum te velles afficere? [Parsimonia]

80. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. I: p. 55.

This comment appears in the dedication of a copy of the work to Lionell d'Este.

81. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. I: p. 55.

Tanto t'affermo, io scrissi questi libretti non ad altri che a me per consolare me stessi in mie avverse fortuna. [Theogenius]

82. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. I: p. 55.

E parsemi da scrivere in modo ch'io fussi inteso da'miei non litteratissimi cittadini. [Theogenius]

83. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 85.

A Genipatro, uomo prudentissimo, nulla fu difficile conoscere che a que' constumi lascivi e a quella vita oziosa e inerte di Tichipedo.... [Theogenius]

84. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 62.

Genipatro, quel vecchio qua su, quale in queste selve dispora vive filosofando, omo per età ben vivuta, per uso di molte varie cose utillissime al

vivere, per cognizion di molte lettere e ottime arti prudentissimo e sapientissimo;.... A Genipatro viveno più e più figlioli, e' libri suoi da sé ben composti ed emendatissimi, pieni di dottrina e maravigliosa gentilezza, grati a' buoni e a tutti gli studiosi, e quanto dobbiamo sperarne immortali. (p. 66) [Theogenius]

85. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 62. This has been condensed from the following passage.

A Genipatro né manca, né mancherà iusto padre d'ogni suo instituto e santissima madre d'ogni sua voluntà, l'intelletto sincero e la ragione interissima. [Theogenius]

86. E.Garin, Intercenali Inedite: pp. 28.

... tua omni ex maxima bibliotheca, quam acclusam detines,....[Somnium]

87. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 152. Libripeta as a scholar will be discussed in a later chapter.

88. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 85.

Rendone a te grazia e a Genipatro, quale uomo come in tutti suoi altri detti, così in questo a me parse simile all'oraculo di Appolline. [Theogenius]

89. Alberti paints a particularly embittered and cynical portrait of humanity in Theogenius. See in particular pp. 92 - 94, of C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II.

90. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 92.

91. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 88.

E quanto pronto vediamo ora niuna, come dicea Mannilio poeta, segue mai simile a una altra ora, non agli animi degli uomini solo, quali mo lieti, poi tristi, indi irati, poi pieni di sospetti e simili perturbazioni, ma ancora alla tutta universa natura, caldo el dì, freddo la notte, lucido la mattina, fusco la sera, testé vento, subito qieto, poi sereno, poi pioggie, fulgori, tuoni, e così sempre di varietà in nuove varietà. [Theogenius]

92. Giuseppe Martini, Momus o del Principe, Nicola Zanichelli, Bologna, 1942.

93. G. Martini, Momus: p. 91 and 111.

94. G. Martini, Momus: p. .

95. G. Martini, Momus: p. 186.

96. G. Mancini, Momus: p. 117.

Interea apud superos studia partium tantas in simultates et factiones excerverant, ut omne caelum non minus quam tres esset in partes divisum. Namque hinc Iuno, quae aedificandi libidine insanibat, quam poterat maximam suarum partium vim et manum et bonis et malis artibus cogebat, ad hominumque salutem tuendam instruebat; hinc contra turma illa popularium et eorum quidem quibus non ex sententia cum statu rerum suarum agebatur, sponte congruebant, sed immoderatam rerum novandarum cupiditatem, qua flagrabant, studio gratificandi deorum principi honestabant. Medium quoddam tertium erat genus eorum, qui cum ignobilis levissimique esse vulgi caput grave et periculosum putarent, tum et cuiquam privatorum subesse recusarent, contentionum eventum sibi etiam quiescentibus expectandum indixerant, ea mente, ut in quamcumque visum foret partem tuto attemperateque prosilirent, suisque motibus rem quoquo versus vellent, ex arbitrio traherent.

97. G. Mancini, Momus: p. 180.

Nam unde gratia debebatur, inde invidua redundavit, unde subsidia ab vitam expectabantur, inde iniuria, unde boni bona pollicebantur, inde mali mala rettulerunt. Dices: ea fuere quidem eiusmodi ut hominibus evenire consueverint, et te meminisse hominem oportet.

98. G. Martini, Momus: p. 75 - 77.

99. G. Martini, Momus: p. 179 - 80.

Ego, a patria exul, aetatis florem consumpsi continuis peregrinationibus, assiduis laboribus; diutunam per egestatem, perpetua cum inimicorum tum et meorum iniuria vexatus, pertuli et amicorum perfidiam et affinium praedam et aemulorum calumnias et inimicorum crudelitatem; fortunae adversos impetus fugiens, paratas in ruinas rerum mearum incidi. Temporum perturbationibus et tempestatibus exagitatus, aerumnis obrutus, necessitatibus oppressus, omnia tuli moderate ac modice, meliora a piisimus dis meoque fato sperans quam exceperim. Atqui o me beatum. modo mihi ab cultu et studiis bonarum artium quibus semper fui deditus, feliciora rependerentur! Sed in litteris quid profecerim, aliorum sit iudicii.

100. G. Martini, Momus: p. 182-184.

101. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 273.

102. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 282.

E bench'ella sia cura più da non la recusare che da sperare sanità, tu pure con ogni arte, studio, diligenza, industria, ancora e ancora e senza intermissione osserva e' gesti e le compagnie sue, cura che si rammendi e ritraisi da tanta perversità. [De Iciarchia]

103. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 286.

> Dissivi quale fia l'officio di questo primario e massimo moderator degli altri, quale vi confesso, persino da quella età che questi mie' capelli eron biondi, persino a questa che ora sono canuti e bianchi, sempre desiderai, sempre quanto in me fu ingegno e attitudine, con ogni studio, fatiche, vigilanza, cercai de essere: non questo tanto per darmivi duttore, quanto per essere in me atto a tanto vostro bene. [De Iciarchia]

104. C. Grayson, On Painting and On Sculpture, Phaidon Press, 1972: p. 12.

105. Eugenio Garin, "Il pensiero di Leon Battista Alberti: caratteri e contrasti," Rinascimento Vol. 12, 1972: p. 15 -16.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER II

1. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 138.

> Cosi disse Agnolo a noi:...Vorrebbesi tesé, Battista, esser laggiù a quel nostro Gangalandi co' cani, o all colline o a' piani, ed essercitarsi qualche ora, e poi ridursi agli studi delle lettere e a filosofia come è tua usanza, Battista.

2. There has been long debate about the authorship of the Vita anonyma. Today scholars seem to be in accordance that it was indeed Alberti's. For a discussion of the Vita anonyma, and the questions surrounding its authorship consult Riccardo Fubini and Anna Menci Gallorini, "L'autobiograpfia di L. B. Alberti. Studio e edizione (Rinascimento, Vol. 12, 1972: p. 21-78). The authors elaborate on the attribution of the text to Alberti based on philological and textual evidence.

To see Vita anonyma as an "autobiography," typifying a genre, is to misinterpret the thrust of the work, which so I hold has been designed as a platform to develop the interlocutor of "Baptista." Vita anonyma is not "autobiographic" as much as it is a character description. The consistencies between Vita anonyma, and the figure of Baptista as described, or as participating in, his other writings would support this conclusion.

3. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. cxii.

> Ex solo intuitu plurima cujusque praesentis vitia ediscebat.
>
> Ferrariensibus ante aedem, qua per Nicolae Estensis tiranni tempora maxima juventutis pars ejus urbis deleta est, o amici, inquit, quam lubrica erunt proximam per aetatem pavimenta haec, quando sub his tectis multae impluent guttae:.... (p.xc - xcii)

Alberti claims he predicted the infamous 1435 massacre in Ferrara, as well as numerous other events. "Prudent opinion and reason combine with the divinatory arts in predicting the future (p. cxii)."

4. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. xcviii - c.

Inter principes tamen italos, interque reges exteros non defuere uni atque item alteri testes et praecones virtutis suae,....

5. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. xcii.

Cum hasta parem habuit saltantium ferme neminem,....

6. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. xcii.

Armorum praeludiis adolescens claruit:.... Numulum argenteum manu tanta vi emettebat, ut qui una secum afforent in templo, sonitum celsa convexa tectorum templi ferientis numi clare exaudirent.

7. For a discussion refer to: C. Grayson, Opuscoli inediti di L. B. Alberti: "Musca," "Vita S. Potiti." (Florence, 1954).

8. Alberti in his introduction addressed to the curia makes it clear that he does not want to be responsible for the changes typical of this "scribendi genere." "Since I must bow to your [Dati's] wishes, tell me whose life I should describe first and I will strive to the best of my ability to satisfy your expectation. You shall, as they say "superintend" my work: and as soon as I write something, you will see it and correct it. Then in truth, it will be that what you order and judge to be done will be done.(C. Grayson, Opuscoli inediti di L. B. Alberti: "Musca," "Vita S. Potiti." (Florence, 1954). p. 64.)

9. C. Grayson, Opuscoli inediti di L. B. Alberti, "Musca," "Vita S. Potiti." Florence, 1954: pp. 35.

10. C. Grayson, Opuscoli inediti di L. B. Alberti, "Musca," "Vita S. Potiti." Florence, 1954: p. 85.

Hic Potiti serdici corpus posuimus, qui famem sitimque, exilium, solitudinem ultimamque

paupertatem perpeti, gloriam omnesque cruciatus parvifacere ac mortem ipsam pro Christi religione appetere. [Vita S. Potiti]

11. C. Grayson, Opuscoli inediti di L. B. Alberti, "Musca," "Vita S. Potiti." Florence, 1954: p. 65.

Est ea quidem adolescentis constantia et miraculorum multitudine singularis, in qua colenda qui se exerceat multam dicendi materiam inveniat multamque sibi attentionem comparet. [Vita St. Potiti]

12. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. xcviii.

Vixit cum invidis et malivolentissimis tanta modestia, et aequanimitate, ut obtrectatorum, aemulorumque nemo tam etsi erga se iratior, apud bonos et graves de se quidpiam, nisi plenum laudis, et admirationes auderet proloqui.

13. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 277.

Ma niuna dissimilitudine, niuna disgregazione e alienazione d'animi e voluntà mai sarà da natura maiore quanto de' buoni virtuosi mansueti contro a' viziosi ambiziosi rapaci. [De Iciarchia]

14. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. xcviii.

Quin et fuere ex necessariis (ut cetera omittam) qui illius humanitatem, beneficentiam, liberalitatemque experti, intestinum, et nefarium in scelus ingratissimi, et crudelissimi conjurarint, servorum audacia in eum excitata, ut vim ferro barbari immeritissimo inferrent.

15. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 126 - 128.

16. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 127 - 128.

Itaque tantis calamitatibus actus ac devictus adolescens incenso animo indignatione et iracundia haec in verba prorupit. Quid ego Superos in me fore propitios sperem, qui quidem me reipsa sentio egregie esse perpetuam ad miseriam natum? [Pupillos]

17. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. cvi.

Ceretis in rebus mediocratatem approbabant. Unam excipiebat patientiam, quam aut nimis servandam, aut nihil suscipiendam statuebat, ajebatque per sapius graviora ob patientiam tollerari, quam ob vehementem acrimoniam tullissemus.

18. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. xc.

Omnibus in rebus, quae ingenuum et libere educatum deceant, ita fuit a pueritia instructus, ut inter primarios aetatis suae adolescentes minime ultimus haberetur.

19. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. xcvi.

...quandoquidem sibi secus, quam caeteris auctoribus non licuerit; cuique enim ajebat ab ipsa natura vetitum esse meliora facere sua, quam possit facere.

20. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. xc.

Ingenio fuit versatili, quoad nullam ferme censeas artium bonarum fuisse non suam.

21. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. xcii.

Musicam nullis praeceptoribus tenuit, et fuere ipsius opera a doctis musicis approbata.

22. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 118.

Io non potrei dipingere né fingere di cera uno Ercole, un fauno, una ninfa, perche non sono essercitato in questi artifici. Potrebe questo forse qui Battista quale se ne diletta e scrissene. [Profugiorum]

23. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 182.

...come fece qui Battista, qual cavò e' suoi rudimenti di pittura e anche e' suoi elementi pur da' matematici, e cavanno quelle incredibili preposizioni de motibus ponderis. [Profugiorum]

24. Lynn Throndike, University Records and Life in the Middle Ages, Columbia, N.Y.: p. 341-343.

25. G. Martini, Momus: p. 164.
Alberti explains that the philosophers know the design (lineamentis) of the heavens but ignore the facts of human existence.

26. G. Martini, Momus: p. 162.

Negavit Charon grandioribus verbis pusilliora, aut ordinatius confusiora audisse upsiam dici.

27. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: p. 811.

Difficilis nimirum pervestigatio. [IX,9]

We must also keep in mind that Alberti was a practitioner of the arts and thus had the defensive instict of all artists to retain the autonomy of art above and beyond abstract philosophical notions.

28. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 38.

Sphaerica superficies dorsum sphaerae imitatur. [I, 4]

29. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 106.

> ...natura...quae hanc legem rebus imposuivisse visa est, ut nulla sit ars quae non a mendosis admodum initiis exordium sumpserit. [III, 63]

Alberti has revamped the following Ciceronian statement. "Nihil est enim simul et inventum et perfectum" (Brutus, xviii, 71).

30. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 78 - 80.

> ...in pingendis regibus, si quid vitii aderat formae, non id praetermissum videri velle, sed quam maxime possent, servata similitudine, emendabant. [II, 40]

31. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 62.

> Quae cum ita sint, consuevi inter familiares dicere picturae inventorem fuisse, poetarum sententia, Narcissum illum qui sit in florem versus, nam cum sit omnium artium flos pictura, tum de Narcisso omnis fabula pulchre ad rem ipsam perapta erit? Quid est enim aliud pingere quam arte superficiem illam fontis amplecti? [II, 26]

It is worthwhile to note that Plotinus had condemned that which Alberti glorifies, namely the equation of art and simulation, despite the fact that there is an undeniable Neo-Platonic element in Alberti's theory.

> Whoever throws himself upon them (beautiful simulacra) urged by the desire to touch real things, is like him who wanted to seize his beautiful reflection floating on the water and - this is what the legend means in my opinion - fell into the profound abyss and disappeared. (Plotinus, Enneadi, Bari, 1947: p. 107.

Whereas for Plotinus the tale of Narcissus signifies how representation is a dangerous illusion in and for itself, for Alberti, the tale is employed on a smaller scale to represent an original aesthetic impulse.

32. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 98.

...sed ne a natura quidem petita uno posse in corpore reperiri, idcirco ex omni eius urbis iuventute delegit virgines quique forma praestantiores, ut quod in quaque esset formae mulierbris laudatissimum, id in pictura referret. [III, 56]

33. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: p. 811.

A pertissimis veterum admonemur, et alibi diximus, esse veluti animal aedificum, in quo finiundo naturam imitari opus sit. [IX, 5]

The relationship between nature and mathematics is one of the themes of IX,5.

34. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: p. 449.

Illis, ni fallor, abhibita ornamenta hoc contulissent, fucando operiendoque siqua extabant deformia, aut comendo expoliendoque venustiora, ut ingrata minus offenderent et amoena magis delectarent. Id si ita persuadetur, erit quidem ornamentum quasi subsidiaria quaedam lux pulchritudinis atque veluti complementum. Ex his patere arbitror, pulchritudinis quasi suum atque innatum toto esse perfusum corpore, quod pulchrum sit; ornamentum autem afficti et compacti naturam sapere magis quam innati. [VI, 2]

35. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: p. 843.

Et vitium erit ita rem duxisse, ut, cum alioquin ex fundamentorum rationibus sese habeat non pessime, tamen ita sit, ut, cum ornamenta desideret, tamen excultiora reddi ornamentorum elegantia nullo pacto possit,... [IX, 8]

36. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: p. 813.

Hoc si persuadetur, haud erit quidem prolixum ea recensere, quae adimi augeri mutarive praesertim in formis atque figuris possint. [IX, 5]

37. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 161. The theme of the mosaic, fundamental to Alberti's literary theory, will be discussed in detail in a later chapter.

38. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 120.

...veris naturae corporibus persimillima esse intuentibus appareant. [I, 1] [De Statua]

39. Alberti differentiates between two types of statues, a direct imitation and a simulacrum [I, 5]. However, he does not make it very clear how the artist imagines a simulacra in his mind, as it does not correspond to a real object, but an ideal one.

40. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 118.

Io non potrei dipingere né fingere di cera uno Ercole, un fauno, una ninfa, perché non sono essercitato in questi artifici. Potrebbe questo forse qui Battista quale se ne diletta e scrissene. [Profugiorum]

41. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 120.

Namque hi quidem cum additamentis tum ademptionibus veluti qui cerca et creta quos Graeci plasticos, nostri fictores appellant;... [De statua]

42. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: p. 813.

Ut vero de pulchritudine iudices, non opinio, verum animis innata quaedam ratio efficiet. [IX, 5]

43. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 120.

Hinc nimirum studia hominum similibus efficiendis in dies exercuere quoad etiam ubi nulla inchoatarum similitudinum adiumenta in praestita

materia intuerentur, ex ea tamen quam collibuisset effigiem exprimerent. [De statua]

44. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 52.

Apud Hispanos pleraeque virgines candidae putantur, quae pud Germanos fuscae et atri coloris haberentur. [1, 18]

45. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 78.

... sic in omni re animus variete et copia admodum delectatur. [II, 40]

46. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 212.

Neque enim laudibus imprimis ornanda sunt ea que natura ipsa vel fortuna largita est, sed longe admiratione dignissima sunt que labor, sudor, atque ars, manusve hominum ab honestatem adjecit. [Defunctus]

Petrarch had said that men are great "not because of fortune", but because they have received "the gift of virtue and gloria." Alberti never speaks of any such divine gift,- as opposed to the dangerous and arbitrary gift of Fortune. Man improves on himself to elevate himself. Alberti never claims that God is in any way responsible for virtue. On Petrarch see E. Rice, T.E. Mommsen, Medieval and Renaissance Studies, (Cornell University Press, 1959) p. 194 ff.

47. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 150.

Nos idcirco cum nostra superiori, tum hac liborum hortatione et commonefactione excitati atque erecti prosequamur in litteris,... [De commodis]

48. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: p. 611.

...talis esto, qualis videri velis;... [VII, 10]
This so Alberti suggests should be insribed in a public temple!

49. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari. Vol. II, p. 131.

...e interverracci che simulando diventerremo quali vorremo parere. [Profugiorum]

50. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari. Vol. I: p. 133.

...; concessegli forma e membra acomodatissime a ogni moviment. e quanto basta a sentire e fuggire ciò che fusse nocivo e contrario; attribuigli discorso e giudicio a seguire e apprendere le cose necessarie e utili; dièGli movimento e sentimento, cupdità e stimoli pe' quali aperto sentisse e meglio seguisse le cose utile, fugisse le incommode a dannose; donògli ingegno, docilità, memoria e ragione, cose divine e attissime ad investigare, distinguere e conoscere quale cosa sia da fuggire e qual da seguire per ben conservare sé stessi. E aggiunse a questi tanti e inestimabili doni Iddio ancora nell'animo e mente dell'uomo, moderazione e freno contro alle cupidità e contro a' superchi appetit con pudore, modestia e desiderio di laude. [Della Famiglia]

51. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari. Vol. II: p. 151-52.

52. Aristotle, Rhetorica ad Alexandrum, 1440b - 1441b.

53. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 228.

"O hominum, inquit, prudentissime, o justissime, o felicissime Neophrone, quanti te in vita fecisse decuit, cujus memoriam non paribus, sed meritis laudibus concelebramus? Quibus honoribus, qua gratia coram viventem amplecti oportuit, quem defunctum tantis desideriis prosequamur? Quanti tuam facere memoriam convenit, cujus virtutes tantas fuisse nemo non intelligat, admirentur universi? Quis nunc te locus dignus pro his meritis tuis habet? Ipsi profecto olympo ornamentum et decus attulisti. Oh! virtutem egregiam, oh! memoriam felicissimam, oh! cives desertos, cum te huic urbi natura eripuerit; oh! beatissimos, quibus te dei optimi pietas concivem ascripserit! oh! infelices, cum te ad supermam virtutem et gloriam imitandam hortatorem et magistrum

amiserint; felices, si laudum et nominis tui florentissimam famam animis et memoria retuerint!" [Defunctus]

54. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 228.

... quid hujus temulenti blacteronis confractam, strepentem, confragosamque orationem tam tam attenti potestis audire? [Defunctus]

55. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 230.

Et quid censes? Quamquam inepta, vana, indescensque illius esset oratio ac vultus, tamen, hoc fatear necesse est, non sine aliqua voluptate detinebar; laudibus enim meis, etsi falsi, ornari, nescio quonam ipse pacto gaudebam. [Defunctus]

56. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. I: p. 320.

Mai si nostro officio con opere lodatissime palesarli mendaci e fitti. [Della famiglia]

57. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. cii.

Facile, inquit, patiar, te, quod voles, mentiendo ostendere qualis quisque nostrum sit: tu istiusmodi praedicendo efficis, ut te ists parum esse madestum sentiant, magis quam me tua isthac praesenti ignominia vituperes.

58. Cosimo Bartoli, Opuscoli Morali di L.B. Alberti, 1560: p. 370.

Era costume de nostri antichi, e principalmente di coloro che per la intera cognitione e disciplina delle buone arti e per la religione de loro santissimi costumi erano eccellentissimi, di lodare quei loro cittadini che ne erano degni, e a quali si trouauoano obligati, di fare immortali, per quanto ei poteuano con ogni loro studio e diligentia, i nomi de gli homini eccelenti, e di metterli ancora ne loro scritti. Noi possiamo conietturare, che eglino usassino di far questo,

parte per riconoscere con iustitis, e con equità i meriti, alla quale virtù erano del tutto inclinati: parte ancora per instigare e confermare con piu uehementia gli studiosi giouani, allo esercitia della virtù, accioche ei diuenissino in quel modo, piu utili alla patria, e piu famosi appresso de posteri: parte ancora perche ei consumassino lo otio, delquale sorse abbondauono, in quello eserditio di lodare l'un l'altro grato, e in uero accetto a tutti. Et possette tanto appresso di loro lo studio di celebrare, e publicamente e priuatamente, le lodi de gli huomini grandi, che non solo si faceuano le publiche orationi ne mortorii, o si metteuano in scritto, come si fa ancor hoggi, presa tal lodi e delle attioni humane, furono alcuni che gli chiamarono Dii. Alcuni altri ui accommodarono oltra di questo alcune loro fauolose inuentioni, da non si potere in maniera alcuna credere, solo per soiare e esaltare la virtù. [Canis]

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid.

62. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 154.

Come chi navica, se 'l vento preme questa banda, tu in quell'altra osta e offirmati. Non favoreggiar sempre all causa tua, ma confirma teco ogni ragione e scusa di chi ti spiacque. Così seguiranno tuo corsi in vita, sopra e' flutti e tempesta del vivere, equabili e sicurissimi [Profugiorum].

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER III

1. Aristotle, Politics, III.6.5, 91281b.

2. In Book II of Profugiorum Alberti recounts the return of Ulysses. He transforms Ulysses from a cunning hero into a true Stoic, adding: "Oh! if all were were like you!" (p. 152.)

3. There is evidence to suggest that Alberti knew Elio Sparzio's biography of Hadrian in which Hadrian talks of his own literary achievements, one of which was a Vita. Sparzio is mentioned by Alberti in Profugiorum (C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 143). See also R. Fubini and A.M. Gallorini, "L'autobiografia di L.B. Alberti, studio e edizione" in Rinascemento (Vol. 12. 1972: p. 26 ft. 3.)

4. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. I: p. 133.

> Fece la natura, cioè Iddio, l'uomo composto parte celesto e divino, parte sopra ogni mortale cosa formosissimo e nobilissimo. [Della Famiglia]

5. Petrarch worked on the book intermittedly. He planned to do a history beginning with Adam, but reduced it to biographies of twelve Roman heroes.

6. E.F. Rice (Ed.), Medieval and Renaissance Studies of T.E. Mommsen, Ithaca, 1959: p. 173.

7. Ibid. P. 174.

8. Matteo Palmieri (1405-1475), gonfalonier, ambassador, and humanist planned De temporibus as a history of the world from the creation to 1449. The text was finished by the Pisan Mattia Palmieri (d.1483).

9. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. I: p. 69.

10. A. Bonucci, Vita di L.B. Alberti: p. xcviii.

11. A. Bonucci, Vita di L.B. Alberti: p. civ.

Fuerunt qui ejus dicta, et seria, et ridicula complurima colligerent, quae quidem ille ex tempore, atque vestigio celerius ediderit ferme, quam praemeditarit.

12. A. Bonucci, Vita di L.B. Alberti: p. cvi. The reference to the "honored purple" could possibly allude to the purple gown of the "master of poetics and history." Petrarch was buried with such a gown which represented his status as poet laureate. Alberti of course received no such honor. (Cf. Billanovich, Petrarca letterato, I. Lo scrittoio del Petrarca, Rome, 1947, p.340, n.1.

13. A. Bonucci, Vita di L.B. Alberti: p. cviii.

14. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 131.

Degne fatiche le nostre per quale possiamo a que' che non sono in vita con noi mostrare d'esser vivuti con altro indizio che colla età, e a quelli che verranno lasciargli di nostra vita altra cognizione e nome che solo un sasso a nostra sepoltura inscritto e consignato. [Profugiorum]

15. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 132.

E noi, produtti in vita quasi come la nave, non per marcirsi in porto ma per sulcare lunghe vie in mare, sempre tenderemo collo essercitarci a qualche laude e frutto di gloria. [Profugiorum]

16. C. Grayson, Opuscoli inediti di L. B. Alberti, "Musca," "Vita S. Potiti." Florence, 1954: pp. 72.

Alii enim questibus inserviunt, alii militie insudant, alii litteris et vigiliis marcescunt, omnes ut fama clariores in hominum ora quam gloriosi in dei conspectum veniant.

17. A. Bonucci. Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. civ.

18. Pope Eugenius IV issued two bulls to effect Alberti's employmnet: a general one annulling the prohibition against natural children receiving holy orders and ecclesiastical benefices, and one specifically permitting Alberti to accept a prebend as a case in point. Alberti worked in the curia from 1432-1464. See Girolamo Mancini, Vita di L.B. Alberti, Rome, 1967: p. 88-89.

19. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. I: p. 230.

20. A. Bonucci, Vita di L.B. Alberti: p. xcviii.

21. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 44.

Nam prestantius sic esse recte opinantur ii qui laudem cupiant, quippiam etsi non omni ex parte perfectum atque absolutum conari, quam in litteris silentio consenscere. [De commodis]

22. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 48.

Excelsi quidem animi officium putabam labores, vigilas, omnesque reliquas studiorum curas et difficultas subire ac preferre vel sciendi causa, vel honoris et fame adipiscende gratia, quas me res posse litteris assequi existimabam. [De commodis]

23. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 150.

Quibus omnibus rebus si diligentissimam adhibueris operam, adolescens, comperies litteras esse voluptuosissimas, utillimas ad laudem, ad gloriam,

atque ad fructum posteritatis et immortalitatis accommodatissimas. [De commodis]

Most likely Alberti felt he was following in the footsteps of Petrarch, who admitted having a strong desire to establish his name for posterity. However, unlike Alberti, Petrarch occasionally reproaches himself. "You are seeking fame among men and in the immortality of your name more than is right." (W.H. Draper, Petrarch's Secret, London, 1911, p. 166.)

24. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 135.

Un ricordo non voglio preterire, che a ogni ottima instituzione, a ogni bene addutta ragione del vivere, a ogni culto e ornamento dell'animo nostro molto e molto gioverà darsi alle lettere, alla cognizione e perizia de' ricordi e ammonimenti quali e' dotti commendorono all posterità. Come la mano compremendo radolca e prepara la cera a bene ricevere l'impressione a sigillo della gemma, così le lettere adattano la mente ad ogni officio e merito di gloria e immortalità. [Profugiorum]

25. Ludwig Pastor, The History of the Popes, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., London, 1923: p. 167, 169.

26. In none of Alberti's writings, even those dedicated to princes, do we find the flattery typical of Manetti and others. See Manetti's dedication to De dignitate et excellentia hominis.

27. The dialogues of Bruni and Poggio are well known to have been conceived as propaganidizing the flourishing culture of Florence. (See David Marsh, The Quattrocento Dialogue; Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1980: p. 25.)

28. G. Martini, Momus: p. 6.

29. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 137. The relationship between literature and public life will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.

30. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 127.

31. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 125.

32. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. xciv.

33. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 66.

Denique omnes infinitis odiis ad studiosorum famam dilacerandam pervigilant, ut nisi te velis scurram aliquem levissimum ac nebulonem haberi, plane non tuo arbitrio et libertate, sed arctissima censura plebis tibi sit vivendum. [De commodis]

34. For the traps the jealous gods lay for Momo see G. Martini, Momus: p. 17. See also Profugiorum

Pènsavi tu se mai fusti in terra alcuna ove quanti vi siano uomini, tante vi siano trappole, quante vi s'usano parole, tante vi siano bugie e periuri. [p. 154]

35. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: p. 863.

Quod si forte ad te susceperis, ut operis curator et finitor esse velis, vix erit ut vites, ne omnia aliorum vita erroresque, seu imperitia seu negligentia commissa sint, ad unum te ipsum referantur. [IX, 9]

36. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 142.

37. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. cxiv.

Vere novo cum rura et colles efforescentes intueretur, arbustaque, et plantas omnes maximam prae se fructum spem ferre animadverteret. Vehementer tristis animus reddebatur, hisque sese castigabat dictis: "nunc te quoque, o Baptista

tuis de studiis quidpiam fructum polliceri oportet."

38. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. c.

Suas inventiones dignas, et grandes exercentibus condonavit.

39. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. xc.

Ut reliqua omittam, fingendo atque pingendo nomem quoque adipisci elaboravit, adeo nihil a se fore praetermissum voluit, quo fieret ut a bonis approbaretur.

40. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: p. 781-3.

Verum quando posteritati famam cum sapientiae tum etiam potentiae relinquendum omnes assentiamur - eaque re, uti aiebat Tuchidides, magna struimus, ut posteris magni fuisse vedeamur. [IX, 1]

41. Ibid.

42. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 132.

Dicea Ennio poeta: non mi piangete, non mi fate essequie, ch'io volo vivo fra le parole degli uomini dotti. [Profugiorum]

43. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 106.

...quandoquidem primi fuerimus qui hanc artem subtilissimam litteris mandaverimus. [III, 63]

44. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 90.

Ea scripta non extant hac tempestate. Nos autem qui hanc picturae artem seu ab aliis alim desciptam ab inferis repetitam in lucem

restituimus, sive nunquam a quoquam tractatam a superis deduximus,...[II, 48]

45. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 106.

Nam si quod laudis est conari id perficere nostrum ingenium nequivit, meminerint tamen solere in maximis rebus laudi esse id voluisse quod difficillimum esst. [III. 63]

46. G. Mancini, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. 495.

Leon Battista Alberti, uomo di squisito ingeno e dottrina, muore in Roma, avendo composito un egregio volume sull'architettura. [De temporibus, 256]

Mattia Palmieri (d. 1483) should not be confused with Matteo. Mattia attempted to complete De temporibus upon the death of Matteo, (1405-1475), who had begun the project as a history from Adam to 1449.

47. For an account of Alberti's will refer to G. Mancini, "Il testamento di L. B. Alberti" in Archivo Storico Italiano, Rome, LXXII, 1914, p. 48; and F. Borsi, L. B. Alberti, New York, 1975, p. 17-18. Alberti left a certain amount of money as a stipend for future students from the Alberti family. However, if the male branch was to die out, as it soon did, the money was to be distributed among ten choir boys, whose obligation it was to sing High Mass every Sunday in S. Petronio.

48. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 208.

49. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 208.

Neo.: Dilacerarunt, mi Polytrope, libellos meos mea manu conscriptos, tantis lucubrationibus evigilatos, magna ex parte excultos, meos libellos dilacerarunt ut unguentum exciperent.
Pol.: O factum sceleste!
Neo.: Ergo per omnem atatem elaboravi ut eruditissimos cuculos ederem: illic igitur mea

studia omnia et vigilie et expectationes mee omnes conciderunt. [Defunctus]

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER IV

1. C. Grayson. Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 174.

Quanti meno sono che potessero soffrire coll'animo non rotto ed equabile quest durezze, tanta sarà lode maggiore la mia bene averle sofferte. [Profugiorum]

2. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. I: p. 285 - 286.

E ben sai, in tanta diversità d'ingegni, in tanta dissimilitudine d' opinioni, in tanta incertitudine di voluntà, in tanta perversità di costumi, in tanta ambiguità, varietà, oscurità di sentenze, in tanta copia di fraudolenti, fallaci, perfidi, temerarii, audaci e rapaci uomini, in tanta instabilità di tutte le cose, chi mai si credesse colla sola simplicità e bontà potersi agiugnere amicizia, o pur conoscenze alcune non dannose e alfine tediose? Conviensi contro alla fraude, fallacie e perfidia esser preveduto, desto, cauto; contro all temerità, audacia e rapina de' viziosi, opporvi constanza, modo e virtù d'animo; a qual cose i' desidero pratico alcuno uomo, da cui io sia più in fabricarmi e usufruttarmi l'amicizie, che in descriverne e quasi disegnarle fatto be dotto. [Della Famiglia]

3. Ibid.

4. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 131.

Ottima simulazione sarà qui fare quello che fa chi non si perturba né si commuove. [Profugiorum]

5. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 131.

Né sia chi stimi non essercitandosi abituare in sé virtute alcuna. Non scrivendo, non pingendo, mai diventersti pittore o scrittore. [Profugiorum]

6. Alberti takes this theme central to Christian ethics and combines it with principles of Stoic philosophy to arrive at an argument that states that actions on the behalf of virtue must be performed in times of good fortune when they come easy, so that in times of bad fortune they receive their maximum effect. (C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 123 - 124.)

> ... e ricordianci che ne' tempi della seconda fortuna prepariamo e' rimendi contro l'avversità. [Profugiorum]

7. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 228.

> ..., infelices, cum te ad supremam virtutem et gloriam imitandam hortatorem et magistrum amiserint;.... [Defunctus] Neophronos (the voice of the dead "author") is praised in an oration as someone who "imitated the sublimest virtue and highest glory."

8. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 110.

9. G. Martini, Momus: p. 165.

10. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 120.

> Fit namque natura, qua nihil sui similium rapacius inveniri potest, ut lugentibus conlugeamus, ridentibus adrideamus, dolentibus condoleamus. [II, 41]

11. G. Martini, Momus: p. 165.

12. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 277.

13. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 277

Gli studi, le voglie, le deliberazioni al tutto fra quesi sono opposite e repugnante. [De icarchia]

14. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 128.

E poi che oggi cosiì si vive che nulla si fa o dice non fitto e simulato, prima ne consiglieremo e col tempo e con noi stessi quanto sia da credere o refutare agni altrui parola o fatto. [Profugiorum]

15. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. cviii.

Rogatus qui nam essent hominum pessimi; respondit: qui se optimos videri velint, cum mali sint.

16. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 290.

Adonque si lodava in simili modi Paulo Apostolo essere corretto da Dio, per non seguire la dannazione e tenebre del mondo: al quale esso ne ammonisce dobbiamo come a ferocissima bestia resistere, perseverando con vera fede e intera religione, essere infinita intelligenza, poiché el fece noi ornati di tanto intelletto, simile sia bontà infinita. [Epistola consolatoria]

17. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. I: p. 171.

Imperoché le cose vere e buone stanno da sé allumate e chiare, allegre, scorgonsi invitanti, voglionsi fare. Ma le cose non buone sempre giaciono adombrate di qualche vile o sozzo diletto, o di che viziosa opinione si sia. Non adunque si vogliono fare, ma fuggile, seguire la luce, fuggire le tenebre. La luce dell operazioni nostre sta nell verità, stendesi con lode e fama. E niuna cosa piu è tenebrosa nella vita degli uomini quanto l'errore e la infamia. [Della Famiglia]

18. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 144.

Quare siquid fame et laudi consulendum putabunt pulchre domi sese occlusos detinebunt: resque omnes foris elegantes, amenas, admirationeque, dignas omnino hi tales abdicabunt a se atque proscribent;... [De commodis]

19. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 78.

Dicea Assioco, presso a Platone, la plebe altro essere nulla che inconstanza, inferma, instabile, volubile, lieve, futile, bestiale, ignava, quale solo si guidi con errore, inimica sempre all ragione, e piena d'ogni corrotto iudizio. [Theogenius]

20. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 129.

Oggi siede el popolo all spettacolo, e io voglio essercitarmi in curar nulla questa voluttà; rinchiuderommi tra' miei libri e starommi solo. Se così deliberasti fare, niuna suasione d'altrui, nulla cosa potrà avvenirti in mente che ti distolga dal tuo instituto. Ma tu quanto darai orecchie o fede a cosa che ti disduca da questo proposito, quanto penderai coll'animo verso dove la volutta t'alletta, tanto sarai non ben costituto né bene addritto a sostenere te stessi; e quanto non atuterai le voglie tue e dara'ti a non repugnarle, tanto dispiacerai a te stessi, e tanto sarai non tuo né libero. Spegni, succulca quel pensiero. Refuta ogni cagione e condizione quale interrumpa e' tuoi culti a virtù. [Profugiorum]

21. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 188.

22. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 144.

... mens omni perturbatione vacua, contra omnem fortunam victrix persistit.[De commodis]

23. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 182.

Confesserovvi di me stesso, a me non rarissimo intervenne ch'io posto in mezzo dove erano alcuni

invidi, procaci e temulenti, de' quali più d'uno con vari stimoli e aculei di parole per incitarmi ad ira di qua e di qua mi saettavano, stetti parte sì occupato ad altre mie investigazioni, parte sì disposto a nulla curarli piuù che se fussero quel corvo che salutava Cesare, o quel psittaco che gridava chere, chere, che io nulla udiva, nulla vedea, nulla sentiva altri che me stessi;... [Profugiorum]

24. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. c.

Praeterae cum tempore (sic) incidissent, ut his, a quibus graviter esset laesus privata sua fortuna valeret pulere, quo meritis referre, beneficio et omni humanitate maluit, quam vindicata efficere, ut scelestos poeniteret talem a se virum fuisse laesum.

25. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 90.

Natura enim ipsa indies atrum et horrendum opus usu pingendi odisse discimus, continuoque quo plus intelligimus, eo plus ad gratiam et venustatem manum delinitam reddimus. In natura omnes aperta et clara amamus. [II, 47]

26. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 145.

... tanto può l'invidia in questa nostra età fra e' mortali e perversità.... Tu, Battista, seguita còn ogni opera e diligenza esser utile a' tuoi cittadini. [Profugiorum]

27. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 137.

Qual convenga in noi essere premeditazion e instituzione d'animo per esculdere e proibire da noi ogni perturbazione vedesti nel libro di sopra, e credo ti satisfece. [Profugiorum]

28. C. Grayson, Intercenali inedite: p. 15.

Tertio loco mulier picta est succincta veste e suffarcinata cum talaribus, que quidem, cultro circum vepribus auries cesis, aream pede putaminibus purgat atque spatiosiorem reddit. Titult huic superadscriptus: Cura virtutis, Securitatis animi filia. [Picture]

29. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 58.

Sequitur ut pictorem instituamus quemadmodum quae mente conceperit ea manu imitari queat. [I, 24]

30. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 58.

Si qui vero sunt pigri artifices, hi profecto idcirco ita sunt quod lente et morose eam rem tentent quam non prius menti suae studio perspicuam effecere, dumque inter eas erroris tenebras versant, meticulosi ac veluti obcaecati, penniculo, ut caecus bacillo, ignotas vias et exitus praetentant ac perquirunt. [III, 59]

31. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 299.

Non fare e non dire cose non prima premeditata;... [Sentenze Pitagoriche]

32. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 120.

... ma restici persuaso che l'animo può mai starsi ocioso, sempre si volge e avvolge in sé qualche investigazione o disposizione o appreensione di cose, quali se sarano gravi, degne e tali ch'elle adempiano l'animo, nulla più altro vi si potrà immergere; se saranno lievi, galleggeranno mezzo a' flutti della ment nostra, e come avviene, di coas in cosa ondeggeranno e' nostri pensieri persino che picchieranno a qualche scoglio di qualche aspra memoria o dura alcuna voluntà, onde poi ivi noi sentiámo gli urti dentro al nostro petto i terati e gravi. [Profugiorum]

33. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 120.

Le perturbazioni, voglio favellare cosi, piovono e versansi nell'animo nostro vacuo. [Profugiorum]

34. Alberti discusses the various "remedies of the soul" at the end of Book II of Profugiorum.(C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 175-180.)

35. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 183.

Così, non dubitate, se instituiremo in noi buona ragione di vivere, se ci daremo a lodati essercizi, se insisterremo in pervestigazioni di cose degne e prestantissime, se ci adempieremo di virtù e constanza, certo potremo, con nostra pace e lieta quiete e degna tranquillità d'animo, quanto vorremo contro al dolore, e contro ogni malzia e malvagità di qualunque sia omo in vita perfido e inquissimo. [Profugiorum]

36. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 144.

Que due res ad bene beateque vivendum fundamenta atque robur sunt, quibus iactis et constitutis virtutem animis magnificentius instruimus, ratio ipsa virtutis comes florescit, animus intelligentie et sapientie munere fruitur, mens omni perturbatione vacua, contra omnem fortunam victrix persistit. [De commodis]

37. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 113.

Ma intervienci come alla colonna: mentre che'ella tiene sé in stato ritta e in se stessi offirmata, ella non solo se sustenta ma e ancora sopra ivi regge ogni grave peso; e questo medesima colonna, declinando da quella rettitudine, pel suo in se insito carco e innata gravezza ruina. [Profugiorum]

38. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. I: p. 132.

39. "Templum enim Dei sanctum est, quod estis vos;" Augustine, City of God, XVII,viii. See also Hugh of St. Victor, De Arca Noe Morali, IV, i, col. 664: "Ipse artifex eris, cor tuum locus, cogniationes tuae materia" ("You are its builder, you build it in your heart, your thoughts are its material").

40. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 107.

E certo questo tempio ha in sé grazia e maiestà: e, quello ch'io spesso considerai, mi diletta ch'io veggo in questo tempio iunta insieme una gracilità vezzosa con una sodezza robusta e piena, tale che da una parte ogni suo membro pare posto ad amenità, e dall'altra parte compreendo che ogni cosa qui è fatta e offirmata a perpetuità. Aggiungni che qui abita continuo la temperie, si può dire, della primavera: fuori vento, gelo, brina; qui entro socchiuso da'venti, qui tiepido aere e quieto: fuori vampe estive e autunnali; qui entro temperatissimo refrigerio. [Profugiorum]

41. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 173.

42. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 173.

E in prima la giustizia, lume e splendore di tutte le virtù, e accusa e appellasi deserta da te, dove tu così quasi in prova degeneri dall virilità e dal giusto, e retto stato di ben vivere, abbandonando te stessi e tuo offio. [Profugiorum]

43. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. I: p. 174.

44. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 78.

Dicea Assioco, presso a Platone, la plebe altro essere nulla che inconstanza, inferma, instabile, volubile, lieve, futile, bestiale, ignava, quale solo si guidi con errore, inimica sempre all ragione, e piena d'ogni corrotto iudizio. [Theogenius]

45. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 58.

Subtilissimis autem et ad picturam bene pronis ingeniis haec, quoquomodo dicantur, facillima sane et pulcherrima sunt, quae quidem rudibus et a natura parum ad has nobilissimas artes pronis, etiam si ab eloquentissimis dicantur, admodum ingrata sunt. [I, 22]

46. G. Martini, Momus: p. 25.

Alberti describes a procession of gods prior to a conference on the fate of the world. Triumph and Trophy lead the way followed by Mother Virtue flanked by Praise and Posterity.

47. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 131.

E per adattarci a virtù intrapreenderemo qualche essercizio virtuoso, in quale occupati ne esserciteremo assiduo pensando, investigando, adunando, componendo e commentando, e accomandando all posterità nostra fatica e vigilie. [Profugiorum]

48. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 107.

...e dall'altra parte compreendo che ogni cosa qui è fatta e offirmata a perpetuità. [Profugiorum]

49. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 58.

...semperque ex his quaeque pulcherrima et dignissima deligamus. [III, 56]

50. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: P. 863.

His artibus adiuncto studio et diligentia sibi gratiam architectus opes nominisque posteritatem et gloriam nanciscetur. [IX, 10]

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER V

1. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 267.

Tutte le multitudini da natura sono distinte in due ragioni di persone, de' quali alcuni di loro per prudenza, uso e cognizione delle cose, e per autorità sono atti a inducere e reggere gli altri a buono e desiderato fine. Simili omini sempre furono in ogni congregazione rari e pochi, e a costoro si convience certa opera e officio proprio loro. [De Iciarchia]

2. Cicero for example writes "Ne vobis multitudine literarum molestior essem." Cited in: An Abridgment of Ainsworth Dictionary, English & Latin, T. Morell (Ed.) Philadelphia: Urich Hunt & Son, 1845, p. 747.

3. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: P. 269.

Quibus in dotibus omnibus pauci una inter mortales praestant atque excellunt. [IV, 1]

4. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: P. 269.

Hinc igitur prima nobis patebit divisio, ut paucos ex omni multitudine seligamus, quorum alii sapientia consilio ingenioque illustres,.... [IV, 1]

5. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 267.

Tutte le multitudini da natura sono distinte in due ragioni di persone, de' quali alcuni di loro per prudenza, uso e cognizione delle cose, e per autorità sono atti a inducere e reggere gli altri a buono e desiderato fine. [Profugiorum]

6. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p.270 .

Altro sarà tenere in mano la squadra, la linea, lo stile: altro adatterlo bene al tuo lavoro. [De Iciarchia]

7. G. Mancini, Momus: p. 13.

... proxime ad hos accedebat ut belle dea Fraus fecisse videretur quod muliebres mortalium adiecisset delitias, artesque fingendi, risumque, lachrymasque.

8. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. I: p. 255.

9. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 220-21.

Diventasi virtuoso imitando e assuefacendosi a esser simile a coloro quali sono iusti, liberali, magnifichi, magnanimi, prudenti, constanti e in tutta la vita ben retti dall discrezione e ragione. [De Iciarchia]

10. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. I: p. 297.

11. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. I: p. 298.

12. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. I: p. 297.

Tu con ciascuno di questi ramenterei immitassi Alcibiade, quale in Sparta, terra data all parsimonia, essercitata in fatiche, cupidissima di gloria, era massero, ruvido, inculto; in Ionia era delicato, vezzoso; in Tracia con quelli s'adattava a bevazzare ed empiersi di diletto; e tanto sapea sé stessi fingere a quello acadea in taglio, che sendo in Persia, altrui patria, pomposa, curiosa d'ostentazioni, vinse el re Tisaferne de elazione d'animo e di magnificenze. [Della Famiglia]

13. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. c.

Ignarum se multis in rebus simulabat, quo alterius ingenium, mores peritiamque scrutaretur.

14. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari. Vol. II, p. 279.

Sono gli animi e mente degli omini vari e differenti; alcuni sùbiti al coruccio; alcuni più facili e misericordia; alcuni acuti, suspiziosi; alcuni creduli, pure; alcuni sdegnosi, provani, acerbi; alcuni umani, trattevoli, ossequiosi; alcuni festerecci, aperti, goditori; alcuni subdoli, solitari, austeri; alcuni amano esser lodati, soffrano esser ripresi; alcuni contumaci, ostinati a ubbidire niuno altro che la legge; duri nel commandare, crudeli nello sdegno effiminati ne' pericoli, e simili: sarebbe prolisso raccontarli. Conviene che 'l nostro prudente iciarco esplori, tenti, ricognosca ora per ora costumi, vita e fatti di ciascuno de' suoi, e a ciascuno adoperi ottima e accomodata ragione di comandare. [De Iciarchia]

15. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari. Vol. II, p. 278.

Quella emulazione per quale tu cerchi meritar fama e gloria sopra gli altri, viene da prestanza d'ingegno e generosità d'animo, e acquistila non con malignità, ma solo con virtù quale sede in te. [De Iciarchia]

16. Etienne Gilson, History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages, New York: Random House, pp. 216 - 224. See also Ernest Renan, Averroes et l'averroïsme, rev. ed. by H. Psichari, Paris, 1949.

17. M. Jamil-ur-Rehman, The Philosophy and Theology of Averroes, Baroda, 1921: p. 51-52)

18. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 130.

Così adunque a noi; e in questo così essercitarci faremo come fa el musico che insegna ballare alla gioventù: prima sussequita col suono el moto di chi impara, e così di salto in salto meno errando

insegna a quello imperito meno errare. [Profugiorum]

19. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. I: p. 255.

20. Studi e Documenti di Architettura Nr.1, Dec. 1972: p. 139.

Quare istos admonendos puto, prius advertant quid sit, quod efficere instituerimus, subinde spectent, an ex instituto succedant res; postremo de nobis, et de se judicent statuantque uti lubet. Nam quum intelligent, quibus ex fontibus certitudinis hausta haec sint, quidvis poterunt credere quam in his rebus rarissimis, et reconditissimis tractandis me frustra labores comsumpsisse, tantumque aberit, ut poeniteat operae, ut etiam majorem in modum gratulentur, sese istis monitis, et sua diligentia eximiis pictoribus esse effectos pares, quam rem magis experiundo intelligent, quam a me verbis possit explicari:

To avoid such skepticism, I think from the first you should direct the work of your charges, before they realize what ends we are determined to accomplish. Then let them see whether results follow from these lessons. Finally, let them judge and evaluate us and themselves as they wish. For when they understand from what fonts of certainty these precepts are drawn, they may think if they wish that my labors have been wasted in treating the finest points and the most recondite aspects of this art. But I think that that far from being dissatisfied with my writing, they shall be exceedingly grateful, for through these precepts and their own careful effort, they will be rendered equal to the task of producing distinguished pictures. [Elementa Picturae]

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 58.

Hic enim sola prima picturae artis rudimenta pictor quidem pictoribus recensui. [I, 23]

24. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: P. 531.

...ita et hominibus praeponendum intelligeret genus aliud animantium, quod multo praestaret sapientia atque virtute. [VII, 1]

25. The difference between intelligentia and ratio is described by Acquinas: "intellect (intelligere) is the simple grasp of an intelligible truth, whereas reasoning (ratiocinari) is the progression towards an intelligible truth by going from one understood (intellecto) point to another. The difference between them is thus the difference between rest and motion or between possession and acquision."

26. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 127.

27. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 60.

Subtilissimis autem et ad picturam bene pronis ingeniis haec, quoquomodo dicantur, facillima sane et pulcherrima sunt,... [I, 22]

To intelligent minds that are well disposed to painting these things are simple and beautiful, however presented,...

28. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 60.

Has ergo laudes habet pictura, ut ea instructi cum opera sua admirari videant, tum deo se paene simillimos esse intelligant. [II, 26]

29. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 102.

Si qui vero sunt pigri artifices, hi profecto idcirco ita sunt quod lente et morose eam rem

tentent quam non prius menti suae studio perspicuam effecere, dumque inter eas erroris tenebras versantur, meticulosi ac veluti obcaecati, penniculo, ut caecus bacillo, ignotas vias et exitus praetentant ac perquirunt. []III, 59]

30. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 42.

... ex quo profecto ornatissimam et beatissimam atque deorum persimilem vitam ducet. [De commodis]

31. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. I: p. 132.

Pertanto troppo mi piace la sentenza d'Aristotile, el quale constitui l'uomo esser quasi come un mortale iddio felice, intendendo e faccendo con ragione e virtù. [Della Famiglia]

32. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 241.

L'opera dello ingegno e intelletto hanno in sè molto parte di divinità. [De Iciarchia]

33. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 122.

Questo intelletto, questa cognizione e ragione e memoria, donde venne in me sì infinita e immortale se non da chi sia infinito e immortale? [Profugiorum]

The heroic sentiment as we have already seen was an essential part of early Renaissance thought. Trinkhaus describes the Humanists as "alive, actively assertive, cunningly designing, storming the gates of heaven." (Charles Trinkahaus, In Our Image and Likeness, University of Chicago Press, 1970: p. xxi) However, it should be noted that nowhere in the writings of Petrarch, Salutati, Valla, Manetti, Poggio, and Bruni does one encounter such a rich and forceful exploration of the spiritual will to define oneself as immortal and godly.

34. G. Martini, Momus: p. 4.

Qua nimirum intelligimus rara eo sapere omnia divitatem, quo illus tendant, ut unica, atque egregie sola, a caeterorumque caetu et numero segregata habeantur.

35. G. Martini, Momus: p. 4.

Hinc fortassis illud est quod si quos praestare ingenio et prae caeteris eo a multitudine deflectere animadvertimus, ut sint illi quidem suo in laudis genere singulares ac perinde rari, hos divinos nuncumpemus proximeque ad deos admiratione et honoribus prosequamur natura edocti.

36. C. Grayson, Opuscoli inediti di L. B. Alberti, "Musca," "Vita S. Potiti." Florence, 1954: pp. 70. The concept of a human demi-god was not uncharacteristic in Renaissance thought. Valla also described the soul as homo-deus, but Valla in keeping with his Neo-Platonism saw this as part of man's ascent up the ladder towards heavenly perfection. For Alberti the homo-deus was not a feature of mankind at large but only for a select few. Furthermore Valla wrote of the soul's ascent to heaven in the language of a Roman triumph, whereas for Alberti the demi-gods are not triumphant but doomed.

37. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 141.

38. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: p. 697.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER VI

1. Paul Oskar Kristeller summarizes the established view of the Renaissance discovery of the individual.

> When we speak about Renaissance individualism,... we mean the importance attached to the personal experiences, thoughts and opinions of an individaul person, and the eager or, if you wish, uninhibited expression given to them in the literature and art of the period. Behind the endless display of gossip and invective, of description and subtle reflection there is the firm belief that the personal experience of the individual writer is worth recording for the future. [Paul Oskar Kristeller, The Renaissance Concept of Man, New York: Harper and Rowe, 1972, pp. 24 -25.]

It is true that Alberti is part of this general movement, culminating perhaps in Pico della Mirandola's statement: "Thou man, masterful modler and sculptor of thyself mays't shape thyself into which ever form thou wantst" (reprinted in the Excursus No. LXXVIII in Jacob Burckhardt, Die Kultur der Renaissance, 10th edition, Leipzig: 1908, II, p. 314 f.). However, Alberti, so I hold, would have rejected the individualism of Pico's thesis and perhaps tempered it with the observation that "man" is himself an ideogram for society, a more medieval point of view.

2. E. Garin, Intercenali Inedite: p. 15.

> Namque loco primo mira imago adest picte mulieris, cui plurimi variique unam in cervicem vultus conveniunt: seniles, iuveniles, tristes, iocosi, graves, faceti et eiusmodi. Complurimas item manus ex iisdem habet humeris fluentes, ex quibus quidem alie calamos, alie lyram, alie laboratam concinnamque gemmam, alie pictum axcultumve insigne, alie mathematicorum varia instrumenta, alie libros tractant. Huic superadsriptum nomen: Humanitas mater. [Picture]

3. The themes associated with Prometheus changed from the classic mythology to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance (See Olga Raggio, "The Myth of Prometheus", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, Vol. 21: 1958, pp. 44 -

55). As O. Raggio explains, by the fourteenth century the image of Promethius enlivening man with a spark of divine fire seems to have been commonplace. The ring and the gem were iconographic devices of particular importance.

4. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 57 -58.

Qui colonne fabricate dalla natura tante quante tu vedi albori ertissimi, Qui sopra dal sole noi copre ombra lietissima di questi faggi e abeti, e atorno, dovunque te volgi, vedi mille perfettissimi colori di vari fiori intessuti fra el verde splendere in fra l'ombra, e vincere tanto lustro e chiarore del cielo; e da qualunque parte verso te si muove l'aura, indi senti venire a gratificarti suavissimi odori. ... E questo qui presso argenteo e purissimo fonte, testimone e arbitro in parte dellis studi mei, sempre m'arride in fronte, quanto in lui sia, attorno me si avolge vezzosissime erbette, ora con sue onde sollevandosi e dolce immurmmurando bello m'inchina e risaluta, ora lieto molto e quietissimo mi s'apre, e soffre ch'io in lui me stesso contempli e specchi. [Theogenius]

5. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 122.

Quinci saremo in ogni officio d'umanità e culto di virtù ben composti, e ben servirem all a naturale società e vera religione, e preporrenci in ogni nostra vita esser constanti e liberi. [Profugiorum]

6. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 61.

Certa consiste ferma e constante sempre in ogni suo ordine e progresso la natura; nulla suol variare, nulla uscire da sua imposta e ascritta legge,....

7. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 59.

Scritto adunque in questa parte, ora qui meco ripensava quanto un vizioso e perverso ingegno fusse a sé e a chi seco vive pestifero e perniziosissimo più che qual sia altro animale essecrabile, quali tutti, pacifica la loro natura, raro se non a sua difesa irati offendono con quelle armi sue date loro dalla natura, ungui, corna,

denti e simile. Solo all'uomo iniquo diletta la sua malignità, e irato e non irato con arme e modi infiniti immette sua peste e morte. E quello che la natura proprio e divino suo dono atribuì a' mortali per agiungerli a cara insieme benevolenza e dolce pace, el favellare, lo uomo pessimo l'adopera in disturbare qualunque grata congiunzione e offirmata grazia. [Theogenius]

8. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 76.

Da me, quale sempre diedi opera che niuna mia cosa altrove sia che solo presso ame, nulla può essere rapito. Mie sono e meco la cognizion delle lettere, e insieme qualche parte bene e beato vivere possono a me né da' casi avversi né da impeto alcuno o fraude essere tolte. [Theogenius]

9. H. Mancini, Opere inedita: p. 32.

Domine ne in furore tuo argus me, neque in ira tua corripias me.
Flamma terribilis inter aristas agri; terribilis alta ab rupe ruens.
Mare procella concitum terribile; terribiles aethere grandines et turbines.
Fulgur tonitru perfindens nebulas et alta quatiens robara terribile.
Sub pedibus montes cum redoantes tremunt, et vastum hiant profundum terribiles.
Mihi tu Domine iratus terribilis: tu me jam Domine nutu ipso territas.
Termenti mihi ora tum flagrant flammis, et oculis alto abcorde emanant lacrinae.
Extuat pectore curarum procella, animumque saevi dolorum incursant turbines.
Fulgure irati oculi tui Domine, et verbo tuo tremitat omnis terra.
Lupum agna errans in silvis timet; laqueo implicitus populantem timet palumba innocens.
Tuas ego pertimescam Domine; unicum amabo te et verebor innocens. [Psalmi precationum: secundus]

I it not known when Alberti wrote these Psalms. For a general discussion see G. Ponte, "I salmi di Leon Battista Alberti" (Miscellanea di Studi Albertiani Genova: Tilgher, 1975, pp. 123 - 132).

10. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 167.

Eschilo, poeta tragico, quando egli adduce uno e uno altro degli dii venuti a consolare Prometeo relegato e alligato a quel sasso al Caucaso, non diceano: O Prometeo, non curare e' tuoi mali e non gli entire; ma diceano: Quello che a te è necessità soffrire, soffrilo con qunato men puoi agitare e infuriare te stessi. E Prometeo pur si lagnaca con parole immoderate, e dicea: Io pur feci ch'e' mortali mai più morranno. Io imposi loro molta speranza e molto cieca; e insieme aggiunsi quel vivo e celeste ardore. E qui l'Oceano, massimo degli dii, li rispondea: "Tu, o Prometeo, lascia questo tuo fasto ed elazione antiqua. Usurpa testé nuovi costumi quando el cielo serve a nuovi tiranni, e al tutto modera a questa tua lingua e colla tua summissione molto più che coll'alterezza. L'ira che ti incuoce si spenge e medica colle umii parole; e gioveratti non raro parere men savi e men dotti che noi non siamo. [Profugiorum]

11. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 124.

Dicono: ama la patria, ama e' tuoi sì in far loro bene quanto e' vogliano. Ma e' dicono ancora che la patria dell'uomo si è tutto el mondo, e che 'l savio, in qualunque luogo sarà constituto, farà quel luogo suo; non fuggirà la sua patria, ma addotterassene un'altra, e quivi arà bene assai dove e' non abbia male, e fuggirà sempre essere a sé stessi molesto. E londano quel detto antiquo di quel Teucer, uomo prudentissimo tanto nominato, qual dicea che la patria sua era dov'egli bene assedesse. [Profugiorum]

12. G. Martini, Momus: p. 72.

Sed in hoc differunt, quod geometra instructore qui futurus est geometra indiget, erronum vero ars nullo adhibito magistro perdiscitur. Aliae artes et facultates habent edocendi tempora, ediscendi laborem ,excercendi industriam, agendive quendam definitum descriptumque modum; item adminicula, instrumenta et pleraque istiusmodi exigunt atque desiderant, quae hac una in arte minume requiruntur. Una haec artium est incuria, negligentia, inopia rerum omnium, quas aliis in rebus ducunt esse necessarias, satis fulta atque tuta.... Rides

impune, arguis impune, obiurgas, garris tuo quodam iure impune.... Posse quae velis et nullos habere dictorum factorumque censores,....

13. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 116.

Odiano chi non esca di vita con animo invitto e nulla perturbato. Uomini prestentissimi! Uomini rari! [Profugiorum]

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER VII

1. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 124.

..: le voluntà di colui non esser libere, quale sia osservato da molti. [Profugiorum]

2. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. cviii.

Dicebat omnem splendorem vim habere igneam: non idcirco mirandum, si nimium splendid cives de se in animis hominum invidiam succenderent.

3. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. cx.

Obtrectatores fallaces, ambiguous et omnes denique mendaces, ut sacrilegos, et capitales fures ajebat esse plectendos, qui veritatem judiciumque, religiosissimas, ac multo rarissimas res e medio involent.

4. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari. Vol. II, p. 278.

...: ma il procede nostro in esplicare con qual moderazione di vivere colla multitudine simile agli altri privati cittadini, massime fra coniunti e familiar, ciascun di voi diventi primario e pervenga a tanta eccellenza in quello che sia in liu posto, non in la fortuna, che nulla più vi si possa desiderare, onde sequiti che insieme la famiglia tutta si trovi beata, onarata e felicissima. [De iciarchia]

5. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 174 - 175.

Ajunt Herculem deum, cum primum in coelum defunctus conscendisst, deos qui ab Jove ipso maximo sibi assent obviam emissi, praeter Plutonem, quam familiariter singulos consultasse, hunc vero unicum, ad congratulandum una cum reliquis accurrentem, vultu et verbis ab se non secus atque obscoenum aliquem et foedissimum erronem abegisse;

rogatumque Herculem, quid ita ageret, respondisse: Minime quidem se posse animo aequo hunc esse in coetu deorum pati, quem nunquam toto orbe terrarum lustrato nisi ignavissimis desidiosissimisque hominibus familiarem vidisset. At Plutonem subrisse ferunt, Herculemque ipsum admonuisse ut memineret sibi ceterisque diis templa et aureos honores a nullis majores quam a Plutonis familiaribus deferri. [Pluto]

6. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 269.

Vero, e tanto che senza moderazione de' superiori quasi sarà impossibile che'ella possa vivere altro che dissoluta e perturbata. [De iciarchia]

7. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 157 - 158.

8. E. Garin, Intercoenali Inedite: p. 100 -101.

9. C. Grayson, Opuscoli inediti di L. B. Alberti, "Musca," "Vita S. Potiti." Florence, 1954: pp. 72.

A plebe laudari magnum et honorificum, non approbari ignominiosum.

10. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 148.

..., qui solidam et expressam virtutem non in plebis iudicio esse,.... [De commodis]

11. A. Bonucci, Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. xcii.

... mulatumque reliquarum urbium, et principum motus ab illo fuisset enunciatos.

12. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 78.

Alcibiade, ricco, fortunato, amato, d'ingegno quasi divino, e in ogni lode principe de' suoi

cittadini, nobilitata la patria sua con sua virtù e vittorie, morì in essilo perduti e' suoi beni in povertà, tanto sempre all moltitudine dispiacque chi fosse dissimile a sé in vita e costumi. [Theogenius]

13. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 165.

Ad Euripide poeta parea la inobbidienza della moltitudine più che 'l fuoco valida, e più atta a destruere e consumare le cose. E dicono che la moltitudine sempre fu insuperabile. Omero dicea che 'l male sempre vince; ma quanto e dove e a chi bisogni credere t'insegnerà la necessità [Profugiorum]

14. G. Martini, Momus: p. 185.

15. Consult in particular X, 7; X, 15; X, 16

16. E. Garin, Intercoenali Inedite: p. 13 - 16.

17. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 34 - 35.

Petulcum os et duri invidia oculi fromque omni turpitudine obscena.
Referturo vitio pectus, impia mens, perversum ingenium, et efferatus animus,
Quid vobis cordi injuriae, proditio, scelus, crimen, calumnia semper atque mendacium est?
Vos ne non poenitet usque serdidissimi justorum adversus nos cuis irritare?
Fiant Arabum vobis aromara tete odor et sapiat mel hyblaeum amaros cueres.
Gemmae mater vestros digites fiant atra et vestris in palmis nigresant.
Ager vobis vere non virescat, et poma in hortis vestris acerba cadant.
Putrescat vobis aurum in leves pulveres, sintque vestri omnes conatus frustra.

Is it possible that Alberti is describing his patron for a time Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta? Pope Pius II writes the following of Sigismondo.

> Sigismondo Malatesta was an illegitimate member of the noble family of the Malatestas, and had a great spirit and a powerful body. He was an eloquent and skillful captain. He had studied history and had more than an amateur's knowledge of philosophy. He seemed to be born to do whatever he put his hand to. But he was so ruled by passions, and abandoned himself to such an uncontrollable greed of money, that he became a plunderer and a thief to boot. He was so dissolute that he raped his daughters and sons-in-law. When a boy, he often acted as the female partner in shameful loves, and later forced men to act as women. He had no respect for the sanctity of marriage. He raped virgins who had vowed themselves to God as well as jewesses, killed young girls, and had young boys who rebelled against him brutally whipped. He committed adultery with amny women whose children he hald at baptism, and murdered their husbands. His cruelty was greater than any barbarian's and he inflicted fearful tortures on guilty and innocent alike with his own bloody hands. He rarely told the truth, and was a master of pretense and dissimulation, a traitor and a perjurer who never kept his word. [Pius II, I Commentarii, Siena 1972, I, pp. 186-187]

18. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 244.

19. E.Garin, Intercenali Inedite, pp. 28.

LIBRIPETA: Egi gratias atque ut primum in adversa ripa constiti, intueor prata quedam amplissima, ubi pro cespite atque foliis herbarum surgebant come barbeque hominum, capillique mulierum, atque crines iumentorum; nec non et iube leonum, ut eiusmodi pilis nihil posset in prat non opertum conspici. Enim vero, superi boni, quantum illic numerum somniantum perspexi, nescio quas radiculas effodientes, quas qui edunt et vafri et docti cum minime sint / videntur. Multum illic consumpsi operam. Sed me ignes copia pediculorum, que ex

prato convolabat, pene exedit, ut soa fuga salus mihi petenda. Iccirco conieci me in pedes, atque unde sese mihi exitus obtlit, inde me vesanum tanta ex peste eripuerim, fata hanc nobis cloacam prebuere. [Somnium]

20. By the thirteenth century the theme of contemptus mundi became a commonplace intellectual position. The great classic of the genre was Pope Innocent III's De miseria humanae conditionis (1195). It was universally read well into the seventeenth century. These and other writings argued that wordly life is mutableand transitory, that its pleasures are vain and disappointing, that man is fallen, his nature corupt, and his body infirm. They often depict human society as a caldron of vices and hypocrisies, and a good many of them end with apocalyptic passages describing the punishments of hell and the joys of heaven. For a discussion see Donald Howard, "Renaissance World Alienation," published in The Darker Vision of the Renaissance (Robert Kinsman Ed., Los Angeles: University of California, 1974, pp. 47 - 76).

21. G. Martini, Momus: p. 21.

22. G. Martini, Momus: p. 128.

23. G. Martini, Momus: p. 128.

24. In St. Potiti, a painter has depicted a shipwrek.(C. Grayson, Opuscoli inediti di L. B. Alberti, "Musca," "Vita S. Potiti." p. 71) In De commodis, a painter has portrayed the debased individuals who call themselves writers. (G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 138.)

25. G. Martini, Momus: p. 164-166.

26. It would have been more Christian to have argued that there were two paths, one leading to the good and the other to evil. In Alberti's version there is one path to the good and many side paths which even lead back to the main

path! Alberti's "good" is furthermore not heavenly bliss but rather self-realization. Nevertheless, Alberti description of the path to good as initially hard and as rising steeply is in accordance with the Humanist Christian tradition, in particular that of Petrarch. For a discussion of the Christian conept of the division of the ways see E. Rice (Ed.) T.E. Mommsen, Medieval and Renaissance Studies (Cornell University, 1959) pp. 175 f. It seems that the reason Alberti could not make a reference to this idiom is that the distinction, deriving from Cicero, describes Hercules' decision to follow the path of Virtue over the Path of Pleasure (Voluptas). Pleasure, for Alberti was not defined as inherently evil. It all depends on adoparsi.

27. Prometheus was frequently considered a type of sculptor, a creator of the human race by medieval and Renaissance thinkers. See Olga Raggio, "The Myth of Prometheus", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, Vol. 21: 1958, pp. 47 f.

28. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 58.

29. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 58.

30. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 249.

Ma el consiglio dell'omo grave e buono, simile al sole, cessata la nebbia, splendore per tutto. [De Icinarchia]

31. An oft repeated theme. See C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 108; Vol. I: p. 104.

32. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 133.

Hinc ceteri amici mei perculsi meta fugam sibi propere consuluere: neque enim Polycletus perniculo, aut Phidias scalpro, aut Archimedes oroscopo, aut reliqui inermes adversus audacissimos armatos, eosdemque preaedis atque homicidiis et assuetos bello ad sese tuendos valebant. ... Ergo me infelicissimam ab ipsas diis

omnibus qui tum aderant atque hominibus desertam, pugnis et calucibus totam aconfregere, vesteque meas dirupere, in lutum prostratam reliquere, demum abiere ovantes. [Virtus]

33. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 32.

Onde stimai fusse, qunato da molti questo così essere udiva, che già la natura, maestra delle cose, fatta antica e stracca, più non producea come né giuganti così né ingegni, quali in que' suoi quasi giovinili e più gloriosi tempi produsse, amplissimi e maravigliosi. [Dedicatory Letter to Brunelleschi]

34. C. Grayson, Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 5.

S'i' sto dogliosi, ignun si maravigli,
poiché sì vuol chi può quel che le piace.
Non so quando aver debba omai più pace
l'alma ismarrita infra tanti perigli.

Misero me! A che convien s'appigli
mia vana speme, debile e fallace?
Né rincrescer mi può chi chiò mi face.
Amor, che fai? Perché non mi consigli?

Ben fora tempo ad avanzar tuo corso,
che la stanca virtù ognor vien meno,
né molto d'amendue già mi confido.

Ma s'ancora a pietà s'allarga il freno,
tengo ch'assai per tempo fia il soccorso.
Se non, tosto, udirai l'ultimo istrido.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER VIII

1. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 157.

Dicono che nulla si truova fidissimo renditore quanto la terra. Ella ciò che tu gli accomandasti rende, secondo el precetto di Esiodo, non a pari ma a maggior misura. [Profugiorum]

2. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 86.

Quod si tandem preter mores, preter veterem bonorum consuetudinem quispiam iuste opulentus erit futurus ex doctrina, is plane sit cui fortuna facilior, scientia profundior, auctoritas prestantior, amicorum observantia cultior longe quam ceteris atque emplior fuerit, cuius item facundia, facilitas, ingenium, versutia, calliditas acceptior atque ad hominum aures et opinionem accommodatior. Talem enim hunc esse litteratum opotet, ut dum ei non dubitet civitas universas fortunas commendare suas, tum frequentissimos questus et premia porrigere assuescat. At vero in eo quidem gradu claritatis perpaucissimi reperientur. [De commodis]

3. H. Mancini, Opera Inedita: p. 167.

Sed ubi neminem laedois quidem sum, qui obtrectatores omnes minime reformidandos esse opinabar, vulgique judicium non contemmendum quidem, sed ne tanti faciendum putabum, ut etiam domesticae et privatae rationes vivendi ad vulgi censuram essent instituendae. Siquidem id ita est, nam comperies usque adeo veram et solidam hominis nullius famam quin ea cum facile dicendo possit, tum et soleat obtrectatione invidorum maxima ex parte labefactari. [Paupertas]

4. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 91.

Cosa quasi incredibile che le parole facinino e perdano gli uomini. [Theogenius]

5. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 165

In questa, dove tu non puoi presentarti e avertìlibero, ubbidisci a chi più può. Ad Euripide poeta parea la inobbidienza della moltitudine più che 'l fuoco valida, e più atta a destruere e consumare le cose. E dicono che la moltitudine sempre fu insuperablie. Omero dicea che 'l male sempre vince; ma quanto e dove e a chi bisogni cedere t'insegnerà la necessità. [Profugiorum]

6. Alessandro Parronchi, "Otto piccoli documenti per la biografia dell'Alberti," Rinascemento, Vol. 12, 1972, p. 234.

7. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 122.

Ego vero his meis scriptis genus levandi morbos animi affero, quod per risum atque hilaritatem suscipiatur, ac meis quidem amnibus Intercoenalibus id potissimum a me videri quaesitum cupio, ut qui legerint nos cum facetos fuisse sentiant, cum sibi ad graves curas animi levandas argumenta apud nos non inepta inveniant. [Intercoenales]

8. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 55.

Tanto t'affermo, io scrissi questi libretti non ad altri che a me per consolare me stessi in mie avverse fortune. [Theogenius]

9. Lucia Cesarini Martinelli, "Philodoxeos Fabula," Rinascimento, Vol. 17, 1977: p. 146.

Idcirco hanc in eo quo tum eram constitutus merore incommodorum meorum et acerbitatis illorum, quibus ut essem carior omnes boni desiderabant, consolandi mei gratia fabulam scipsi,....

10. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 142.

11. E. Garin, Intercoenali inediti: p. 11.

Quod etsi fortassis fit his nostris intercenalibus ut aures multitudinis affendantur, non tamen est cur nolim hoc pacto potius dicendo quam tacendo id eniti, ut me docti, utque in primus hac etate litterarum principes, Leonardo, studiosum esse intelligas atque iccirco vehementius diligas. [Prohemium ab Leonardum Arrentium]

12. A. Bonucci, Vita di L.B. Alberti: p. xcviii.

13. Franco Borsi, L. B. Alberti, Harper and Row, New York: p. 362.

14. L. C. Martinelli, "Philodoxeos Fabula," Rinascimento, Vol. 17, 1977: p. 146.

..., quam quidem inelimatam et penitus rudem familiaris quidam mei studiosissimus subripuit furtimque illam horis paucissimis quam celerrime transcripsit; ex quo factum est ut ad meas mendas scibendi quoque istius festinatione multa vitia adicerentur. Fecit tamen eius me invito copiam vulgo, apud quem librariorum imperitia nimirum omnino inconcinna reddita est:....

15. A. Bonucci, Vita di L.B. Alberti: p. xcvi

Scripsit et praeter hos annum ante trigesimum plerasque Intercaenales, illas praesertim jocosas. Viduam Defunctum, et istis simillimas, ex quibus quod non sibi satis mature editae viderentur, etsi festivissime forent, et multos risus excitarent, tamen plures mandavit igni, ne obtrectationibus sui relinqueret, unde se levitatis forte subarguerent.

16. Ibid.

17. E. Garin points out that Alberti left many works unsigned, a circumstance that has contributed to unrecognized "subterranean" influence on later writers. See E. Garin, "Il pensiero di L.B. Alberti nella cultura del

Rinascimento," Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, no. 209, Rome, 1974: p. 28 f.

18. As quoted in Victoria Kahn, Rhetoric, Prudence and Skepticism in the Renaissance, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985, p. 38.

19. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. I: p. 17 - 18.

The ship metaphor is an important one in Alberti's thought and cannot be discussed here in any depth. The full quotation reads as follows

> When fortune is tranquil and good-natured, but still more when the times are stormy, the good father never departs from the pilot of reason and the careful conduct of life. He remains alert, foresees from a good distance every mist of envy, every storm cloud of hate, every lightning stroke of enmity threatening on the faces of his fellow citizens. Encountering any contrary wind, any shoal and danger which may confront the family, he acts the part of an experienced sailor... he knows that there is more harm than good done by one badly navigated voyage than the successful accomplishemnt of a thousand. Envy vanishes where modesty, not pomp, shines forth; hate falls aside where courtesy, not pride, flourishes...[Watkins, The Family: p. 37]

20. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 136.

> Is it not better to devote oneself properly to a full-fledged vessel, and with virtue as a companion, to undergo perils, than to entrust the course of this life to a single, tiny plank? The Shade of the underworld replied: A free intelligence, at peace with itself, will dismiss the gigantic labors and the unending perils associated with ships, the stupidities of the mob and the upheavals of public life are most oppressive... For this reason the special concern of the pilot must be to see to it that the ship does not recklessly run aground on the shoals, or the shore because of his own or another's laziness or capriciousness, and that the ship does not sink because of some unnecessary weight. The responsible pilot may be obliged to cast, not only his

own family, but even himself - if it is necessary- upon the shores of death, in order to lighten his boat.

21. E. Garin, Intercoenali inediti: p. 13.

Itaque, ut a sinistro pariete incipiam, quo intercenalis hec nostra letiore omine claudatur,.... [Picture]

22. G. Martini, Momus: p. 57 - 58.

Demum sic statuo oprtere his quibus intra multitudinem atque in negocio vivendum sit: ut ex intimis praecordiis nunquam susceptae iniuriae memoriam obliterent, offensae vero liveroem nusquam propalent, sed inserviant temporibus, simulando atque dissimulando; in eo tamen opere sibi nequicquam desint, sed quasi in speculis pervigilent, captantes quid quisque sentiat, quibus moveatur studiis, quid cogitet, quid tentet, quid aggrediatur, quid quemque expediat, quid necesse sit, quos quisque diligat, quos oderit, quae cuiusque causa et voluntas, quae cuique in agendis rebus facultas et ratio sit. Alia ex parte sua ipsi studia et cupiditates callida semper confingendi arte integant, vigilantes, solertes, accinti paratique occasionem praestolentur vindicandi sui praestitam ne deserant;... Omnino illud unum iterum atque iterum iuvabit meminisse, bene et gnaviter fuscare omnia adumbratis quibusbam signis probitatis et innocentiae; quam quidem rem pulchre assequemur, si verba vultusque nostros et omnem corporis faciem assuefaciemus ita fingere atque conformare ut illis esse persimiles videamur qui boni ac mites putentur, tametsi ab illis penitus discrepemus. O rem optimam nosse erudito artificio fucatae fallacisque simulationis suos operire atque obnubere sensus!

23. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: p. 697.

Demum hoc sit rem, stabilitatem degnitatem decusque rei publicae plurimum debere architetecto, ... [Proemium]

24. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 175.

Jam enim eorum, quae vos dicere suspicor, meum quod sit haud satis novi, ac fui quidem in istiusmodi errore diutius ab adolescentia useque versatus, ut quae vulgo esse hominis putent, ea imprudens mea esse dijudicarim. Namque, uti ajunt, mea praedia, mea bona, meas divitias, ex communi reliquorum civium loquendi consuetudine, appellabam. [Divitiae]

25. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 175.

..; qui quidem cum publica summa vigilantia et fide semper tutatus, tum privata mea re imprimis nusquam fuerim non contentos: mea igitur haec meorum sunto. [Divitiae]

26. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: p. 13.

Boni viri, quod parietem aut porticum duxeris lautissimam, quod ornamenta postium columnarum tectique imposueris, et tuam et suam vicem comprobant et congratulantur vel ea re maxime, quod intelligunt quidem te fructu hoc divitiarum tibi familiae posteris urbique plurimum decoris ac dignitatis adauxisse. [Proemium]

27. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 182.

E quando pur mi sentissi non atto con questi rimedi a rassettarmi, io piglio qualche ragione in conoscere e discutere cagioni ed essere di cose da natura riposte e acose. [Profugiorum]

C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 74.

Se m'agrada conoscere le cagioni e principi di quanto io vedo vari effetti prodotti della natura, s'io desidero modo a discernere el vero dal falso, el bene dal amle, s'io cerco conoscere me stesso e insieme intendere le cose prodotte in vita per indi riconoscere e riverire il padre, ottimo e primo maestro e procuratore di tante maraviglio, non a me mancano i santissimi filosofi, apresso de'quali io d'ora in ora a me stessi satisfacendo me senta divenire più dotto anche e migliore. [Theogenius]

28. C. Grayson, On Painting....: p. 44.

Missam faciamus illam philosophorum disceptationem qua primi ortus colorum investigantur. [I, 9]

29. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: p. 887.

Non illa philosophantium hic prosequar, petantne aquae mare quasi quietis locum, radione fiat lunae,... [X, 3]

30. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: p. 863.

Sed ne Zeusim quidem esse pingendo aut Nichomacum numeris aut Archimedem angulis et lineis tractandis volo. Sat erit, si nostra quae scripsimus picturae elementa tenuerit: si eam peritiam ex mathematicis adeptus sit, quae angulis una et numeris et lineis mixta ad usum est excogitata: qualia sunt, quae de ponderibus de superficiebus corporibusque traduntur, quae illi podismata embadaque nuncupant. His artibus adiuncto studio et diligentia sibi gratiam architectus opes nominisque posteritatem et gloriam nanciscetur. [IX, 10]

31. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 182.

M. Marcello presso a Siracuse comandò a', suoi armati che in tanto eccidio di sì nobile terra servassero quello Archimede matematico eccidio di si nobile terra servassero quello Archimede matematico, quale difendendo la patria sua con varie e in prima non vedute macchine e instrumenti bellici, aveva una e una'altra volta perturbato ogni ordine suo e rotto l'impeto di tanta sua ossidione ed espugnazione. Trovoronlo investigare cose geometrice quale e disegnava in sul pavimento in casa sua: e trovoronlo si occupato coll'animo e tanto astratto do ogni altro senso che lo strepito delle armi, e gemito de'cittadini quali cadeano sooto le ferite, le strida della moltitudine quali periano oppressi dalle fiamme e dalle ruine de'tetti e de' tempi, nulla el commoveano. [Profugiorum]

32. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 64.

33. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 68.

34. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 119.

E se dalla vita e costumi loro dobbiamo argumentare e statuire le ragione e modo del vivere bene e lodati, raccontiamo quegli altri molti più che questi, pur filosofi, quali furono contenti d'una sola e trita vesta, quali per loro diversorio abitavano un vaso putrido e abietto, quali vissero non d'altro che di cavoli, quali sì abdicorono da sé ogni cosa fragile e caduca che né fuggo anche io esser prolisso; ma tu, omo litterato, riducetegli a memoria e teco pensa donde questi miei così poterono quello che que' tuoi non volsero, e pensa donde que' tuoi non volsero quello che vollendo poteano pari a' miei. [Profugiorum]

35. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 154.

...; e in questo consiglio, non ti confidare dello ingegno e discurso tuo più che del iudizio de' tuoi denivoli e coniunti, massime esperti e dotti in qualla cosa qual tu tratti, però che con loro raro ti sequirà che tu non ti penta. Non par verisimile che 'l iudizio di più omnini periti e buoni sia fallace. [De Iciarchia]

36. C. Grayson, On Painting....: p. 104 - 106.

... hoc potissimum laborum meorum premium exposco ut faciem meam in suis historiis pingant, quo illos memores beneficii et gratos esse ac me artis studiosum fuisse posteris praedicent. [III, 63]

37. C. Grayson, Opere Volgar, Vol. II: p. 182.

E talor, mancandomi simili investigazioni, composi a mente e coedificai qualche compositissimo edificio, e disposivi più ordini e numeri di colone con vari capitelli e base inusitate, e

collega'vi convemiente e nova grazia di cornici e tavolati. E con simili conscrizioni occupai me stessi sino che 'l sonno occupò me. [Profugiorum]

38. C. Garin, On Painting... p. 90.

Natura enim ipsa indies atrum et horrendum opus usu pingendi odisse discimus, continuoque quo plus intelligimus, eo plus ad gratiam et venustatem manum delinitam reddimus. [II, 47]
(For by Nature with experience of painting, we learn as time goes by to hate work that is dark and horrid, and the more we learn, the more we attune our hand to grace and beauty.)

39. C. Grayson, On Painting...: 64.

Si quando me animi voluptatis causa ad pingendum confero, quod facio sane persaepius cum ad aliis negotiis otium suppeditat, tanta cum voluptate in opere perficiendo insisto ut tertiam et quartam quoque haram elapsam esse postea vix possim credere. [II, 28]

40. It has long been held that Alberti in his treatises on painting and architecture was elevating the arts so that they can be included among the other humanist liberal arts. (See Caroll William Westfall, In this Most Perfect Paradise, Pennsylvania State University Pres, 1974: p. 29.) I hate to refute this, but on the present evidence I hold that such an assertion ignores the important distinction Alberti makes between the writer and the author. In our enthusiasm to endorse Alberti as the proponent of the liberal arts, we fail to be sensitive to the nuances of his argument and his own theoretical strategies.

41. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 163.

Quando molte cose testé non vedi e non odi quali soleano adolorarti, assai vedi quando tu discerni le buone cose dalle non buone, le degne dalle non degne, e assai odi quando to odi te stessi in quelle cose che faccino a virtù e laude. E bene hassi la notte in sé ancora e' suoi diletti. [Profugiorum]

42. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: p. 11.

Quam vero grata et quam penitus insideat animis aedificandi cura et ratio, cum aliunde tum hinc apparet, quod neminem reperias, modo adsint facultates, qui non totus ad quippiam coaedificandum pendeat et, siquid ad rem aedificatoriam excogitarit, volens ac lubens non proferat et quasi iubente natura usui hominum propalet. [Proemium]

43. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: p. 11.

Et quam saepe evenit, ut etiam rebus aliis occupati nequeamus non facere, quin mente et animo aliquas aedificationes commentemur! [Proemium]

44. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 64.

Neque facile quempiam invenies qui non maiorem in modum optet se in pictura profecisse. [II, 28]

45. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 104.

Tum minime verendum est ne vituperatorum et invidorum iudicium laudibus pictoris quicquam possit decerpere. [III, 62]

46. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 102.

Modulosque in charitis conicientes, tum totam historiam, tum signulas eiusdem historiae partes commentabimur, amicosque omnes in ea re consulemus. [III, 61]

47. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 104.

Ergo moderata diligentia rebus adhibenda est, amicique consulendi sunt, quin et in ipso opere exequendo omnes passim spectatores recipiendi et audiendi sunt. Pictoris enim opus multitudini gratum futurum est. Ergo multitudinis censuram et iudicium tum non aspernetur, cum adhuc satisfacere opinionibus liceat. Apellem aiunt post tabulam

solitum latitare, quo et visentes liberius dicerent, et ipse honestius vitia sui operis recitantes audiret. [III, 62]

48. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 88.

Pictos ego vultus, et doctis et indoctis consendtientibus, laubado eos qui veluti exsculpti extare a tabulis videantur,.... [II, 46]

49. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: p. 95.

Ac mirum quidem, quid ita sit, cur monente natura et docti et indocti omnes, in artibus et rationibus rerum quidnam insit aut recti aut pravi, confestim sentimus. [II, 1]

50. C. Grayson, On Painting...: p. 64.

Tametsi haec una ars et doctis et indoctis aeque admodum grata est. [II, 28]

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER IX

1. C. Grayson. Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 128.

...el parlare nostro lo riconosceremo datoci non per detraere, non per eccitar discordie e danno ad altri, ma per commutare nostri affetti, nostri sensi e cognizione a bene e beato viver. [Profugiorum ab aerumna]

2. C. Grayson. Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 66.

A Genipatro vivendo più e più figlioli, e' libri suoi da sé ben composti ed emendatissimi, pieni di dottrina e marvigliosa gentilezza, grati a' buoni e tutti gli studiosi, e quanto dobbiamo sperarne immortali. [Theogenius]

3. C. Grayson. Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 62.

Genipatro, quel vecchio qua su, quale in queste selve disopra vive filosofando, omo per età ben vivuta, per uso di molte varie cose utilissime al vivere, per cognizion di molte lettere e ottime arti prudentissimo e sapientissimo; chè mi stimo le sue parole presso di te, amatore de' dotti e studiosi, aranno autorità, e dileteratti la nostra istoria certo degna d'essere conosciuta. [Theogenius]

4. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 144-156.

Tantis vigiliis, adolescens, te quo is perditum? Tanti labores quid iuvabunt? Quid apud nos hac tua sollertia et assiduitate queritas? Quonam tendunt he vigilantiones, cure, et cognitationes tue? Cupis oblectari dum te ipsum excrucias curis? An tibi unquam aliquod indixeris otium? Sperasne tu divitias idem, qui paupertatem apud nos non metuere didicist? An te preterit nostrum nihil esse venale?

Non te lateat, adolescens, commodius ducere nos, amatores nostros, pauperes habere quam divites. Nam

experti sumus: nemo est unquam factus ditior studiosus, qui non illico delitiis et luxu rerum imbutus ceperit nostram consuetudinem, nostrumque complexum fastidire. Quid tu ne potentiam exquiris? Gaudes honoribus? Affectas dignitates? Desideras amplitudinem?

Falleris, adolescene, falleris: si vulgi assentationes, si plebis plausus preponis virtuti, si fortune ludum, forensem tumultum, populareram auram non longe postponis doctrine et sapiente. Caduca illa, instabilia, fragilia, plena inanium laborum, plena timorum, plena suspicionum, plena casibus et labe.

Quis animi quieti et stabilitati, virtutis disciplinarumque pulchritudini compararit? An fugit, adolescens, te virtutem apud nos undique circumstare? Nullam cupiditatem, nullum fastum, nullam tumiditatem, nullam in animis levitatem amare? Omni caligine, omni umbra turpitudinum mentem expurgatissimam dieri velle? Tum, adolescens, nonne perspicis quam lumine ac splendore suo hec de qua loquimur sapientia nobis deditos illustres ac clarissimos elaboret reddere?

Memento rerum preteritarum, vetustissimam apud nos memoriam integramque prudentiam considera. Que te res omni fortune impetu et casu possit sublevare ac sustinere. Sepone igitur mentem istam cupidam. Exue animum istum spe amplitudinies tumidum Fuge istas divitiarum et futilis fame corrupteque laudis famulas, quas litteris adhibes operas. Stultum est prosequi voluntate quod opera nequeas assequi, stultissimumque id adniti opera, quod si perficere nequeas peniteat laborum, si assequaris turpitudinis pudeat.

Utere apud nos laboribus parcius, virtute acrius: neque peritiam doctrinarum que quidem merito virtutis comes putatur apud nos consectaberis, quin te ab integram potius virtutem spe, ratione et cogitatione in dies reddas aptiorm. Nam ex doctrina et artibus illud preclarum dabitur ut ad sapientiam liceat aspirare: ex virtute divinum illud consequeris , ut quietem animi, laudem, dignitatem et felicitatem adipiscaris.

Quodsi, ut debes, ad virtutem ceteris posthabitis rebus contenderis, maxima omnium vitiorum levatio fiet. Tum maxima laus et gloria succedet. Prestat enim et excellit virtus. Nam ei coniuncta et complexa est divina quidam vis qua levamur a vitiis atque erroribus omnibus; qua laus, honos,

integraque et permanens animi voluptas et quies subsequitur atque persistit.

Quam quidem virtutem qui animo, voluntate et usu comprehenderit, qui solidam et expressam et virtutem non in plebis iudicio esse, sed in animi elegantia et splendore sitam meminerit, is nullum sibi cum fortuna commercium esse volet, is omnia sua in se bona esse posita putabit, ex quo profecto ornatissimam et beatissimam atque deorum persimilem vitam ducet. Que cum ita sint, adolescens, incumbe ad virtutem, ac de his fortune commodis sic iudicato: nihil eorum esse vehementius cupiendum, nihil animi bonis preferendum, nihil admodum probatissimis viris preter sapientiam et virtutem presequendum, nihil preter insipientiam et vitium pertimescendum atque refugiendum. Et enim qui volet suum facere animum ornatissimum, is quidem sordes istas quas voluptates nuncupant, atque illas virtutum inimicas, quas opulentiam et divitias nominant, atque alias istas omnes morum animorumque pestes, quas honores, dignitates, et amplitudinem appellant, despiciat, oderit, et abhorreat necesse est.

Quibus omnibus rebus si diligentis simam abhibueris operam, abolescens, comperies litteras esse voluptuosissimas, utilimas ad laudem, ad gloriam, atque ad fructum posteritatis et immortalitatis accommodatissmas.

Nos idcirco cum nostra superiori, tum hac librorum hortatione et commonefactione excitati atque erecti prosequamur in litteris, Carole, ut nostra apud omnes virtus, me frater, comprobetur et dubitet nemo vel solam a nobis esse quesitam spaientiam. [De commodis]

5. G. Martini, Momus: p. 57 - 58.

In tabellis ista continebantur: principem sic institutum esse oportere ut neque nihil agat, neque omnia, et quae agat, neque solus agat, neque cum omnibus, et curet ne quis unus plurima, neve qui plures nihil habeant rerum aut nihil possint.

Bonis benefaciat etiam invitis, malos non afficiat malis, nisi invitus. Magis notabit quosque per ea quae pauci videant, quam per ea quae in promptu sunt. Rebus novandis abstinebit, nisi multa

necessitas ad servandam imperii dignitatem cogat, aut certissima spes praestetur ad augendam gloriam.

In publicis prae se feret magnificentiam, in privatis parsimoniam sequetur. Contra voluptates pugnabit non minus quam contra hostes. Otium suis, sibi vero gloriam et gratiam artibus pacis potius quam armorum studiis parabit. Dignari se votis patietur et humiliorum indecentias ita feret moderate, uti a minoribus suos fastus volet.

Huiusmodi erant in tabellis complurima, sed illud comnium fuit commodissimum inventum ad multas imperii molestias tollendas: nam admonebat ut omnem rerum copiam tris in cumulos partirentur, unum bonarum expetendarumque rerum, alterum malarum, tertium vero poneret cumulum earum rerum, quae per se neque bonae sint neque malae. Has ita distribuebat, ut iuberet ex bonorum cumulo Industriam, Vigilantiam, Studium, Diligentiam, Assiduitatem reliquosque eius generis deos desumere plenos sinus, et per trivia, porticus, theatra, templa, fora, denique publica omnia per loca, aperto sinu, altro obviis porrigerent et volentibus grate ac lubens traderent. Mala itidem sinu pleno et aperto Invidia, Ambitio, Voluptas, Desidia, Ignavia caeteraeque his similes deae circumferrent atque sponte erogarent non invitis. Quae autemneque bona neque mala sint, ut ea sunt quae bona bene autentibus et mala male utentibus sunt, quorum in numero putantus divitae, honores et talia ab mortalibus expetita, omnia Fortunae arbitrio relinquerentur, ut ex iis plenas manus desumeret, et quantum cuisque videretur, atque in quos libido traheret, conferret.

6. C. Grayson. Opere Volgari, Vol. I: p. 17 - 20.

7. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 64.

...; eoque processit res ut Paulus Aemilius caeterique non pauci Romani cives filios inter bonas artes ad bene beatque vivendum picturam edocerent. [II, 28]

8. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 60.

Sed quoniam hoc perdiscendi studium forte nimis laboriosum iuvenibus videri potest, idcirco hoc loco ostendendum censeo quam sit pictura non indigna, in qua omnem operam et studium consumamus. [II, 25]

9. Charles E. Butterworth, Averroës' Three Short Commentaries on Aristotle's "Topics," "Rhetoric," and "Poetics", Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977, pp. 71 - 78.

10. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 64 - 66.

Liceat de me ipso profiteri. Si quando me animi voluptatis causa ad pigendum confero, quod facio sane persaepius cum ab aliis negotiis otium suppeditat, tanta cum voluptate in opere perficiendo insisto ut tertiam et quartam quoque horam elapsam esse postea vix possim credere. [II, 28]

11. G. Orlandi. De re aedificatoria: P. 611.

12. G. Orlandi. De re aedificatoria: P. 611.

Nos eas apponendas admonitiones ducemus, quibus iustiores modestiores frugalioresque, omni virtute ornatiores et superis gratiores reddamur; qualia sunt, quae leguntur:... [VII, 10]

13. G. Orlandi. De re aedificatoria: P. 611.

Maximeque pavimentum refertum velim esse lineis et figuris, quae ad res musicas et geometricas pertineant, ut ex omni parte ad animi cultum excitemur. [VII, 10]

14. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 144.

Discantque in litteris non tantum vim et causas rerum, sed formam etiam culturumque virtutis et glorie. [De commodis]

15. A. Bonucci, Vita di L.B. Alberti: p. c.

Illis libris illecti, plerique, rudes concives studiossimi literarum effecti sunt.

16. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 144.

Decet enim prudentes eos, qui probe litterati esse aut videri volunt, sic ad studia incendi, sic interlibros versari, ut suum primum officium putent, sese non magis doctrina, quam virtutibus ornatissimos reddere. [De commodis]

17. C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 162.

E ricordommi di quello che e' referiscono di Alessandro Macedone, quale essendogli presentato un forzerino bellissimo lavorato, non sapea che imporvi cosa preziosissima e condegna d'allogarla in sii maravigliosa cassetta. Pertanto comandò vi riponessero e serbassono sentro e' libri di Omero, quali certo, non nego, sono specchio verissimo della vita umana. [Profugiorum]

18. Jesse m. Gellrich, The Idea of the Book in the Middle Ages, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1985: p. 33.

19. Ibid. p. 35.

20. Ibid. p. 35.

21. C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 262 - 263.

22. C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 262 - 263.

Dieci leggi non più a numero dopo Moise, resse tutta la nazione ebrea cento e cento e cento e più volte cent'anni con venerazione di Dio e osservazione della onestà, equità e amor della patria. A Romani bastò per amplificare la sua Republica,

vendicarsi tanto principato, solo dodeci brevissime tabule. Noi abbiamo sessanta armari pieni di statuti, e ogni dì produchiamo novi ordinamenti. [De Iciarchia]

23. C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. I: p. 261.

E voglionsi e' buoni tutti riputare amici,.... [Dalla Famiglia]

24. C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 122.

... servire a Dio non sia altro che darsi a favoreggiare e' buoni e a mantenere giustizia? [Profugiorum]

25. C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 121.

La multitudine perpetuo vive; mutansi di prole in prole; vola loro età; tardi a spaienza, presti a morte, queruli in vita, abitano la terra. [Profugiorum]

26. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 132.

Missa facio reliqu obscena litteratis a plebe imposita ignominia. Illud vero pretermittamus quod aiunt: nescire se qua re nostros litteratos debeant magnificare, quos plane videant circa vite usum ea negligere, que bene beatque vivendum admodum necessaria sunt. [De commodis]

27. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 125.

28. G. Martini, Momus: p. 186.

29. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 208.

30. A. Bonucci, Vita di L.B. Alberti: p. c.

Cum libros De Familia primum, secundum atque tertium suis legendos tradidisset, aegre tulit, eos inter omnes Albertos, alioquin ociosissimos, vix unum repertum fore, qui titolos librorum perlegere dignatus sit, cum libri ipsi ab exteris etiam nationibus peterentur; neque potuit non stomachari, cum ex suis aliquos intueretur, qui totum illud opus palam, et una auctoris ineptissimum institutum irriderent. Eam ob contumeliam decreverat, ni principes aliqui interpellassent, tris eos, quos tum absolverat, libros igni perdere.

31. C. Grayson. Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 144.

Oh lume de' tempi nostri! Ornamento della lingua toscana! Quinci fioriva ogni pregio e gloria de' nostri cittadini. [Profugiorum]

32. C. Grayson. Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 144 - 145.

Ma dubito non potrete, Battista, recitare vostre opere; tanto può l'invidia in questa nostra età fra e' mortali e perversità.... O cittadini miei, seguirete voi sempre essere iniuriosi a chi ben v'ami? [Profugiorum]

33. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 138.

Iuris peritia, sacrorum disciplina, cognitioque nature ac forma morum, reliqueve egregie et solis liberis hominibus decrete littere (execrandum facinus!) quasi hasta posita, publice veneunt. Infiniti venalitii licitatores bonarum artium circumvolant, ex agro, silvis, ex ipsaque gleba, et ceno emergunt innumerabiles non homines sed bestie potius ad serviles operas nate, qui spreto rure ad disciplinas veditandas et profandas irruunt. O pestem litterarum! [De commodis]

34. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 90.

35. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 106.

Quos ego, si qui futuri sunt, etiam atque etiam precor ut hoc munus alacri animo ac prompto suscipiant, in quo et ipsi ingenium excerceant suum et hanc nobilissimam artem excultissimam reddant. [III, 63]

36. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 204.

Vide quid sors afferat; nam mihi quidem hac in re tametsi partim temporum nostrorum calamitas deploranda videretur quod etate nostra tanta ad emendandum libellos esset eruditarum aurium penuria, partim mea mihi negligentia improbanda videbatur, quod libellos, quoad in me fuit, non diligentius emendatos reliquerim;... [Defunctus]

37. C. Grayson. Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 102 - 104.

38. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 196 - 98.

NEOFRONO: Exciditne tibi memoria, qua ipse vigilantia, laboribus atque assiduitate me ab conscribendos annales dederim?
POLYTROPO: Teneo id, teque laude ex re dignissimum puto....
NEO: Frusta, mi Polytrope, frustra omnia.
[Defunctus]

39. C. Grayson. Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 6. This is an excert from a poem deploring the debased state of literature.

Ingegno svelto da' pedali stremmi,
in cui le rime fioche e svariate
tengon memoria dell'alme beate,
a cui parlando di lor palma scemi,
dimmi, qual cielo germina o qual
clima corpo che sia omai di vita
privo, sentir si faccia di sua fauce strida?

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER X

1. G. Martini, Momus: p. 92.

Haec ut homines dinoscerent et profiterentur, viri docti et in gymnasiis bibliothecisque, non inter errones et crapulas educati, effecere dicendo, monendo, suadendo, monstrando quid aequum sit, quid deceat, quid oporteat, non popularium auribus applaudendo, non afflictos irridendo, non moestos irritando, fecere, inquam docti ipsi suis evigilatis et bene diductis rationibus, ut honos dis redderetur, ut cerimoniarum religio observaretur, ut pietas, sanctimonia, virtusque coleretur.

2. C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 119.

3. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 34.

Nam esse eos eiusmodi intelliges ut quae in illis tractentur cum arte ipsa auribus eruditis digna tum rei novitate facile delectare studiosos queant. [Ad Johannem Franciscum Illustrissimum Principem Mantuanum]

4. C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 115.

Simili, credo, sarebbono le loro parole. Ma e' fatti quali sarebbono? Quanto converrebbono co'detti loro? E' me gli pare vedere disputare con una maiestà di parole e di gesti, con una severità di sentenze astritte a qualche silogismo, con una grandigia di sue opinioni tale che t'aombrano l'animo, e parti quasi uno sacreligio stimare che possino dicendo errare. Odi que' loro divini oraculi: [Profugiorum]

5. C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 119.

Così questi filosofi, medicatori delle menti uname e moderatori de' nostri animi, vorre' io

m'insegnassero non fingere e dissimulare col volto fuori, ma entro evitare le perturbazioni ed espurgare dall'animo con certa ragione e modo quello che essai giurano potersi. [Profugiorum]

6. G. Martini, Momus: p. 167.

7. A. Bonucci. Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. cx.

Cum intueretur levissimos et ambitiosos aliquos, qui se philosophari profiterentur, per urbem vagari, et se oculis multitudinis ostentare: eccum nostros caprificus ajebat, qui quidem infructuosissimam, et superbam isthanc solitudinem adamarint, quae publica sit.

8. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 138.

Tum: umbres: Sunt illi quidem, inquiunt, quos tu utribus fortassis tutiores esse arbitraris, maximo in periculo constituti, nam is fluvius totus sub undis praeacutissimis confertissimisque scopulis refertissimus est. En utres illos fastu et pompa tumidos nae tu perspicis ut ictibus undarum ad scopulos illisi perscindantur atque deficiant? [Fatum et Fortuna]

9. C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 117.

...: se questi uomini dotti ed essercitatissimi, inventori, defensori e adornatori di queste simili sentenze più tosto maravigliose che vere, o non poterono secondo noi altri men dotti, o forse, secondo voi prudentissimi, non seppero nulla stimare le cose caduce e poco temere le cose avverse, noi altri e d'ingegno e di condizione e di professione minori e in ogni grave cosa più deboli, chente potremo? [Profugiorum]

10. G. Martini, Momus: p. 91.

11. G. Martini, Momus: p. 164.

12. G. Orlandi. De re aedificatoria: p. 881.

Non illa philosophantium hic prosequar, petantne aquae mare quasi quietis locum, radione fiat lunae, ut mare momentis augeatur vicissimque diminuatur: nihil enim ad rem nostram conferent. Illud non praetereundum est, quod ipsis oculis perspicimus:...

13. E. Garin. Intercoenali inediti: p. 24.

Quod si supinam te aliorum pericula sollicitam reddunt, vultures quidem, que ab ipso sub stellis ethere exsangue aliquod pervestigant cadaver, admonuisse decuit. Namque illis quam omnis est casus longe periculosior. [Prohemium ab Poggium]

14. Ibid.

15. G. Martini, Momus: p. 93.

Et diligunt (sic) quidem eam studiosorum familiam,....

16. C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 110.

E questi filosophi con loro parole credono spegner quello che con effeto tanto può per sua natura in noi. Questo donde e' sia non so: pur lo sento in noi mortali esser fisso e quasi immortale. E quale e' sia per sé tanto veemente e tanto ostinato, vi confesso, Agnolo, non lo so: ma che e' sia, lo sento e pruvo, e duolmi. [Profugiorum]

17. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 44.

..., tantum aures ad cognoscendum nimium delitiosas porrigunt: quasi doctis sat sit non pectus sed aures eruditas genere. [De commodis]

18. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 42.

19. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. 1: p. 287.

Ma non ciascuno dotto in lettere saprà porgere la sua virtù con modo e dignità a farsi valere a benivolenza e amicizia, né saprà quello scolastico dove e quanto l'assiduita, lo studio, el beneficio, in questo più che in quello ingegno, luogo e tempo giovi e bene s'asetti; quale cognizione dico, e tu non credo neghi, essere necessaria. [Della Famiglia]

20. E. Garin, Intercoenali inedite: p. 11.

Une quidem erant ex ebore, in quibus gemmarum ornamenta et omnis antiquitatis memoria miri artificis manu insculpta pulcherrime aderant, quas profecto ipse deum rex posset, dignitate servata, inflare; sed in illis hoc aderat vitii, quod sonitum referebant penitus nullum. [Prohemium ad Leonardum Arrentium]

21. E. Garin, Intercoenali inedite: p. 11.

Tertie earnt puellares fistule ex arundine palustri, cera et iunco iuncte, rudes, nulla manu expolite, sed que claram et festivissimam vocem ederent. [Prohemium ad Leonardum Arrentium]

22. E. Garin, Intercoenali inedite: p. 11.

Et hi quidem sumus, qui antiquius ad laudem ducimus posse vel ipsos rusticos in triviis ad saltum et festivitatem puerili hoc nostro et inelimato dicendi genere movere, quam infinitis ornamentis comparandis per silentium consenescere. [Prohemium ad Leonardum Arrentium]

23. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 52.

Multas preterae dicendi rationes que ad motus animorum valent ac denique plures argumentandi modos abiiciat, ne videatur producere disciplinas

ad contemptum et litteras velle despiciendas tradere. [De commodis]

24. A. Bonucci. Vita di L.B. Alberti: p. cx.

Obtrectatores fallaces, amiguous et omnes denique mendaces, ut sacrilegos, et capitales fures ajebat esse plectendos, qui veritatem judiciumque, religiosissimas, ac multo rarissimas res e medio involent.

25. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 44.

Num parum commide Isocratem illum rhetorem imitabimur, qui Busiridem, nequissimum tirannum, laudasse ac Socratem, optimum et sanctissimum philosophum, conditis orationibus vituperasse fertur. [De commodis]

26. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 88.

27. G. Orlandi. De re aedificatoria: p. 95.

28. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 153 - 165.

29. Ibid: p. 165.

30 Ibid: p. 165.

31. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 136.

Ergo qui recte sibi consultum volet publicas istas omnes administrationes effugiat. [De commodis]

32. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 136.

Non enim facile dici potest quanta publica haec omnia munera, cum ceteris expeditis et ab omni reliquo negocio solutis civibus, tum maxime artibus et disciplinarum cognitione occupatis animis, detrimenta afferant. [De commodis]

33. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 44.

Condant illi quidem historiam, tractent mores principum ac gesta rerum publicarum eventusque bellorum. [De commodis]

34. Guglielmo Gorni, "Storia del Certame Coronario," Rinascimento, Vol. 12, 1972: pp. 135-182.

35. Guglielmo Gorni, "Storia del Certame Coronario," Rinascimento, Vol. 12, 1972: pp. 168.

E force sarebbe chi vuj giudicherebbe né interj huomminj, dove non proibissti in tempo quello che vedevj et per vostra divina sapienza conoscievj essere dannoso.

36. Guglielmo Gorni, "Storia del Certame Coronario," Rinascimento, Vol. 12, 1972: pp. 168.

Et chi diciesse una et un'altra libra d'argiento troppo essere premio alle fatiche di qualunque studioso, qual di costoro ciertatorj, mentre che'ssi exercitò in questo ciertame, non pospose ogni sua privata chura et domesstica faccienda, qual di loro non expuose più et più vigilie in elimare et esornare suo poemj? Se in voj sono ingiegnj divinj, et potete estempore et subito podurre ottimj vostrj poemj, meritate biasimo chè non convenisstj, dove dificultà potavate aonesstare simile principiata consuetudine in la patria nostra, qual da voi era stata troppo commendata.

37. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 44.

A nobis magnis vigiliis non prisce imprimis eloquentie et elegantie expetenda laus est, ad

quod etsi viribus totis iam diu contenderimus nunquam tamen ne mediocriter quidem assequi potuimus. [De commodis]

38. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 110.

...: certe illic plures procul dubio longe plures ille pecunias si pretio ad rem visendam intromittat accipiet, quam iurisperiti cum suis omnibus impedimentis librorum machinisque atque architecturis bibliotecarum sint soliti capere. [De commodis]

39. E. Garin, Intercoenali inedite: p. 28.

tua omni ex maxima bibliotheca, quam occlusam detines, adeptus es. [Somnium]

40. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 152.

LIBRIPETA: O Apollo fave. Hos libros dono affer. Aveo videri literatus.
APOLLO: Sis, atqui ut sis noctesque diesque assidue lectitato. Quam ob rem te laudent praebeto; id cum desit, multos ipso collaudato.
LIBRIPETA: Taedet, longeque malo videri quam esse.
APOLLO: Omnium ergo literatorum obtrectator esto. [Apollo]

41. E. Garin, Intercoenali inedite: p. 46.

Hinc fiebat, certandi studio vicendique cupiditate, ut suo etiam maximo cum discrimine quisque eorum ceteros omnes in calamitatem cadere elaboraret, quo exhaustis divitiis quibus elati ipsi, et super quam par esset confidentes efferrentur, nulli per egestatem sibi pares admodum essent futuri. Qua ex re que acerbissime inter eos iniuriarum et vindicte contentiones, que gravissime discorie, que pernities et interitus facile subsectus sit, non recenseo: res ante oculos versatur miseranda et collugenda. [Erumna]

42. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 141.

Tum umbre inquiunt: Id quidem genus mortalium pessimum est, etenim suspiciosi, callidi, invidique apud vos dicuntur, nam perversa natura et deprivatis moribus praediti, cum nolint nare, cum suis paleis gaudent nantibus esse impedimento. Suntque his persimiles aliis furtim et injuria rapiant: alterum illi quidem enim manum musco et limo, qua quidem re evenire fluvio molestius nihil potest, implieitam atque occupatam sub undis habent. Ac est quidem genus id impedimenti ejusmodi, ut manibus semel in gluten actus perpetuo inhaereat: vos vero istos ipsos estis avaros, cupidosque nunque soliti. [Fatum et Fortuna]

43. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 106.

44. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 46.

... tu vero, mi frater, relege hunc nostrum libellum, corrige, immu' a tuo quidem arbitratu, emendationeque tua inventionem nostram effice gratiorem ac digniorem. [De commodis]

45. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 123.

Tu igitur, mi Paule, Leonem Baptistam... ut per te quam emendatior sit. [Epistola dedicatoria ad Paulum Toscanellum]

46. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 36.

... et a nemine quod viderim alio traita litteris materia,....[1, 1]

... quandoquidem primi fuerimus qui hanc artem subtilissimam litteris mandaverimus. [III, 63]

47. C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 162.

... fu in prima quasi divino el concetto e descrizione di tutta la causa agitata da voi, qual compreendesti faccenda da niuno de' buoni antiqui prima attinta. [Profugiorum]

48. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 46.

..., tum etiam quod fuerim materiam nactus non vulgarem neque satis ante hoc tempus axplicitam, gratum tibi futurum arbitror. [De commodis]

49. G. Martini, Momus: p. 4 - 5.

Quare si statuo, fore ut ex raro huminum genere putandus sit, quisquis ille fuerit, qui res novas, inauditas et praeter omnium opinionem et spem in medium attulerit. Proximus huic erit is, qui cognitas et communes fortassi res novo quodam et insperato scribendi genere tractarit.

50. G. Martini, Momus: p. 4.

Itaque sic deputo, name si dabitur quispiam olim, qui cum legentes ad frugem vitae melioris instruat atque instituat dictorum gravitate rerumque dignitate varia et eleganti, idemque una risu illectet, iocis delectet, voluptate detineat, quod apud Latinos qui adhuc fecerint, nondum satis extitere: hunc profecto inter plebeios minime censendum esse.

51. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 142.

Nam tantum quidem a me abest ut litteras non maximi faciam, ut pro litterarum cultu prosequendo multas anxietates, multos labores, multa incommoda, damna, detrimenta, multas erumnas, atque calamitates in vita pertulerim, dum omnio me litteris deditum atque admodum invitis plerisque, quorum ope et suffragio vitam ducebam, dedicatum haui. Et enim paupertatem, inimicitias, iniuriasque non modicas reque (ut molti norunt) leves in ipso etiam fere perficiendi flore.... [De commodis]

52. E. Garin, Intercoenali inedite: p. 28.

Adsunt nameque illic convalles montium, urbi res amisse servantur. ... Utrum et bone artes et prisce latine littere illic amisse iacent. [Somnium]

53. G. Martini, Momus: p. 4.

Quae cum ita sint, non me tamen fugit quam difficillimum ac prope impossibile sit aliquid adducere in medium, quod ipsum non a plerisque ex tam infinito scriptorum numero tractatum deprehensumque exiterit.

54. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 42 - 44.

Nihil mihi unquam pervestiganti in mentem subiit, quod ipsum a priscis illis divinis scriptoribus non pulchre esset occupatum, ut neque eam rem viro hac etate doctissimo quam iidem illi melius dicere, neque mihi simila illis apte et condigne agere relictum sit.... Nos vero iuniores modo aliquid novi proferamus, non vereamur severissima et, ut ita loquar, nimium censoria iudicia illorum,.... [De commodis]

55. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 44.

Tum hac etate qui maiores adsunt natu nonnulla, que fortassis a superioribus scriptoribus neglecta latitabant, laudis et nominis gratia deprehenderunt. [De commodis]

56. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 44.

Denique ita me cognitioni litterarum dedicaram omnio, ut nihil in litteris preclarum esse diceretur quod animo et voluntate no appeterem, quod laboribus, cura, atque vigilis non prosequerer, quodve summa diligentia et observantia quantum possem non excolerem.

Quo illud etiam molestissimum est, quod nisi cum dedecore queas arduam, asperam, difficilemque initam litterarum provinciam deserere quam eandem, non sine maximo labore et erumna, sustineas. (p. 62) [De commodis]

57. References to the terms lucubrazioni are numerous. see H. Mancini, Opera inedita: pp. 125. The word appears in

the first dialogue of Intercoenales in which Leopis is warned by Libripeta (Bookworm) not to recklessly show the product of his nightly studies to the masses. See also C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. II: pp. 131 and 243; G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: pp. 42 and 208.

58. G. Orlandi. De re aedificatoria: p. 441.

Incedebant enim frequentes difficultates et rerum explicandarum et nominum inveniendorum et materiae pertractandae, quae me absterrerent ab incepto atque averterent;.... Itaque anceps eram incertusque consilii, prosequererne an potius intermitterem. Pervincebat amor operis et studiorum caritas; et quod ingenium praestare satis non potuisset, studium ardens et incredibilis diligentia suppeditabat. [VI, 1]

59. E. Garin, Intercoenali inediti: p. 63 - 65.

60. E. Garin, Intercoenali inedite: p. 64.

At enim varia res est eloquentia,... [Prohemium liber septus]

61. E. Garin, Intercoenali inedite: p. 64.

In aliorumque scriptis pensitandis ita sumus plerique ad unum omnes fastidiosi, ut ea Ciceronis velimus eloquentie respondere, ac si superiori etate omnes qui approbati fuere scriptores eosdem fuisse Cicerones statuant. Inepti! [Prohemium liber septus]

62. E. Garin, Intercoenali inedite: p. 64.

Siquidem ut nunc id ita est, ut videre videor, neminem tantisper tinctum litteris, qui etsi intervallo maximo speciem sit aliquam eloquentie conspicatus, quin idem illico eam de sese spem suscipiat ociosus, ut propediem summum in oratorem evasurum se confidat. [Prohemium liber septus]

63. E. Garin, Intercoenali inedite: p. 64.

Cum autem sibi ab rem tenendam plus quam oscitans opinabatur adesse negocii intellexit, tum omni librum copia contendit, ac si ipsis libris, non acerrimo nostro studio, dicendi simus rationem adepturi. [Prohemium liber septus]

64. E. Garin, Intercoenali inedite: p. 64.

Cunmque sesé eloquentie locos satis preter ceteros quisque tenuisse opinetur, fit inter nos ut non consequenda ipsi laude, sed in aliis carpendis et redarguendis fatigemur. [Prohemium liber septus]

65. E. Garin, Intercoenali inedite: p. 64.

... ex suoque quisque sensu non ex re ipsa, ut par esset, aliorum scripta reprobat, studiosorumque nemo est cui certa et non reliquorum iudiciis repugnans sententia adsit. Alios enim nihil ni coturnatum ampulosumque delctat; alii quicquid accuratius aditum promitur, durum id et asperum deputant. Alii flosculos et lautitiem tantum verborum rotundosque periodos lectitando libant et olfaciunt;.... [Prohemium liber septus]

66. E. Garin, Intercoenali inedite: p. 24.

Bubulus limoso in litore inter palustres herbas proiectas capram quandam, que maceriem vetustissimi cuiusdam scrupeum supra saxum collapso templi consederat, his verbis admonuisse ferunt: "Io, quenam te isthuc temeritas, o lasciva, rapuit, ut herboso spreto litore isthec, ardua et penitus invia affectes? An non prestare intelligis dulci et succoso gramine exsaturari, quam aspera continuo rudera et amarum alte caprificum sitiendo carpere? Velim tibi quidem consulas ut, quanto deinceps cum periculo verucas istas ipsas ambias, non peniteat"

Bubulis aiunt capram huiusmodi verbis respondisse: "He, en. An quidem, gravissima et tristissima mollipes, tu ignara es, ut os ventri, ori pedes operam sedulo suppeditent. Mihi autem non bubulus, sed capreus stomachus est. Tibi quidem, si que ipsa carp, eo sunt ingrata quo datum est eadem ut

nequeas attingere, mihi tue isthec ulva eo non grata est, quo passim vel desidiosissimis omnibus pecudibus pateat."

Equidem, mi Poggi, hoc ipsum nobis, dum his conscribendis intercenalibus occupamur, evenire plane sentio: ut sint plerique, qui nostrom cupiant uberioribus et commodioribus in campis eloquentie ali et depasci... qui quidem, si capram hanc nostram audierint, nihil erit quod nos, uti arbitror, reprehendendos ducant. [Prohemium ab Poggium]

67. Cicero, Orator, viii, 24 (H.M. Hubbell, (trans.) Loeb Classic Library, p. 323.)

68. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 138.

Quis non condoluerit tantam iacturam, tantunque naufragium in litteris factum esse intues: posteaquam in has ipsas morum tempestates et procellas incidimus,... [De commodis]

69. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 136-38.

Ex quo effectum est cum sanctissime pene omnes discipline istac hominum fece replete dehonestateque sint, tum idcirco nobilissimi et prestantissimi, qui litteris affici olim consueverant, admodum dedignentur.... Nam aut gibbi, aut strunme, aut distorti et comminuti, stoldi, hebetes, inertes, atque rebus aliis obeundis invalidi et incompotes omnes ad litteras deportantur. [De commodis]

70. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 138.

71. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 138.

Quis non ante oculos veluti pictam rem prospiciat causum atque perniciem disciplinarum et artium? Quis non condoluerit tantam iacturam, tantunque naufragium in litteris factum esse intuens:.... [De commodis]

72. C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 6.

Burchiello sgangherato sanza remi,
composto insieme di zane sfondate,
non posson piu' le Muse far lellate,
poiché per prora sì copioso gemi.

73. C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 6.

Io so un animal che non si stima,
a cui grattargli il mento torna vivo
quand' è pur morto, e pur feroce grida.

74. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 140.

Bone idcirco littere, honestissime artes, sanctissimeque discipline prostant, et questum faciunt. Tune igitur divinarum humanarumque rerum cognitio, bonorum morum et glorie tutrix, optimarum rerum et inventrix et parens extitisti? Que animos hominum ornare, ingenia excolere, laudem, gratiam et dignitatem conferre, rempublicam moderari, ipsumque terrarum orbem, summa lege et ordine, ager consuevisti? [De commodis]

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER XI

1. G. Martini, Momus: p. 13.

2. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 58.

...id prospexi ut clara esset nostra oratio magis quam compta et ornata. [I, 22]

3. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 52.

...; atque erit quidem omnis nostra oratio succincta et pro rei magnitudine brevis,....[De commodis]

4. C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 160.

E notai in ogni vostra argumentazione e progresso del disputare esservi una incredibile brevità. [Profugiorum]

5. C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. I: p. 156.

...;ché sentirai lo stile suo nudo, simplice, e in quale tu possa comprendere ch'io volli provare quanto i'potessi imitare quel greco dolcissimo e suavissimo scrittore Senofonte. [Dall Famiglia]

6. G. Orlandi. De re aedificatoria: p. 443.

Et profecto tam varias res, tam dispres, tam dispersas, tam ab usu et cognitione scriptorum aliens colligere in unum et digno recensere modo et apto locare ordine et oratione tractare accurata et certa ratione monstrare, prosus est facultatis et eruditionis maioris, quam in me profitear. [VI, 1]

7. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 142.

Quibus ego quidem in rebus exponendis ita studui esse brevis, ut multos locos desertos commorationibus, multas argumentationes nudas exemplorum, multas persuasiones vacuas amplificationum consulto reliqerim.... Tum etiam minime sum veritus, ne oratio nostra, que virtute ipsa comite proficisceretur, tametsi ieiuna, exilis, atque humilis esset, possit tamen ad iudicia litteratorum tuto pervenire. [De commodis]

8. Arturo Fallico, Herman Shapiro. Renaissance Philosophy, New York: Random House. 1967. p. 68. Quote is from Book IV of De dignitate et excellentia.

9. A. Bonucci. Vita di L. B. Alberti: p. civ.

De quodam qui diutius inter diserendum ostentandae memoriae gratia nimium multa nullo cum ordine esset prolocutus, cum rogarentur qualis sibi disputator esset visus, respondit: cum sibi peram libris laceris, et disvolutis refertam videri.

10. Ibid.

11. C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p.118.

Ma non voglio estendermi, ch'io sarei prolisso. [Profugiorum]

12. G. Orlandi. De re aedificatoria: p. 443.

...; eoque pacto scribendi laborem levabam discendi cupiditate atque voluptate.

13. C. Grayson. Opera Volgari, Vol. II: p. 140.

NICCOLO: E intendiamovi, Agnolo, e dilettaci. Seguite. Voi fate come fece Dario in Asia, qual dispargea qua e là fuggendo l'oro, le gemme e le cose preziosissime per meglio suttrarsi in fuga e per arrestare e ritardare chi lo perseguia. Così voi, per distorci da quanto ci promettesti, ora

interponete nuove quistioni, degne certo ma da considerarle altrove. Noi vi preghiamo; donateci questa opera. E quanto sino a qui motteggiasti, sia quasi come proemio a questa materia.

AGNOLO: Così vi piace, e Dio ne aspiri. Su, convienci resummere una delle divisioni nostre d'ieri in questa materia;.... [Profugiorum]

14. E. Garin, Intercoenali inedite: p. 24.

At nos rara hec delectant, que inter lautiores cenas ditiorum quam me esse profitear scriptorum, veluti in pulmento subamare interdum herbe, sint non reiicienda. [Prohemium ad Poggium]

15. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria: p. 475.

Caeterum pro operis instituto pauca, que ad rem faciant, succincte repetenda sunt. [VI, 1]

16. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 161

Vedi quanto io mi ti dia facile e largo. Non vorrei essere udito da questi miei filosofi. [Profugiorum]

17. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: pp. 119 and 154.

18. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 137.

Qual convenga in noi esser premeditazione e instituzione d'animo per escludere e proibire da noi ogni perturbazione vedesti nel libro di sopra, e credo ti satisfece. Vedesti con quanta brevità e' ti raccolse molta copia d'ottimi ricordi e sentenze de' nostri maggiori uomini stati prudentissimi e sapientissimi in vita. [Profugiorum]

19. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 137.

In questo libro vedrai in che modo, se forse già fussi occupato da qualche merore e tristizia, o da qualche altro impeto e agitazione d'animo, possi con ragione e modo espurgarla e restituirti ad equibilità e tranquillità d'animo e di mente. [Profugiorum]

20. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 159.

Restavamo ora certi ammonimenti generali accommodati ad espurgare qualunque fusse in noi insita e obdurata grave maninconia,.... [Profugiorum]

21. E. Garin, Intercoenali inedite: p. 24.

22. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 142.

Quibus ego quidem in rebus exponendis ita studui esse brevis, ut multos locos desertos commorationibus, multas argumentationes nudas exemplorum, multas persuasiones vacuas amplificationum consulto reliqerim. [De commodis]

23. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 161 - 162.

Ma chi sarà sì fastidioso che non approvi e lodi costui, quale in sì compositissima opera pose sua industria e diligenza? [Profugiorum]

24. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. I: p. 340.

Vedesti quanto m'ingegnai esser brevissimo. [Della Famiglia]

25. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 142.

Audisti quot apud Grecos, quamque multa ac lauditissima librorum volumina in medium protulerint, quorum quidem omnium etate nostra vix nomina extant? Adde his nostros omnes Latinos qui, prope infiniti, infinitos eosdemque optimos libros

edidere. Quot poete, comici, tragici, elegi, satyrici, heroici, Ennius, Cecilius, Licinius, Attilius, Trabea, Lucetius, Turpilius, Gallus, Nevius, Lucretius. Sed quid omnes aut poetas, qut historicos, aut oratores memorem, Accium, Nigidium, Ceciliu, Cecinam, Cassium, Lucilium, Laberium, Affranium, Pacuvium, Sulpicium, Hortensium, Cottam, Fabium, Catonem, Pisonem, Fannium, Vennonium, CLodium, Celium, Macrum? Quid alios innumerabiles scriptores, quid rethores apud Ciceronem collectos recitem; quid de Pomponio Attico, deque Varrone illo qui de his rebus omnibus conscripsere que hominem scire aut investigare fas est? Pretereo jurisconsultos, non recito illas, ut ita dicam, legiones litteratorum, qui in omni genere doctrine copiosissima et preclara posteris precepta litteris reliquere. Te vero, noster Cicero, etiam pretereo, cujus libri De Gloria, De Consolatione, De Republica, deque ceteris philosophis laudibus tam ab omnibus desiderantur. [De commodis]

26. H. Mancini, Opera Inedita: p. 136.

Advigilarum in multam noctem lectitans de Fato quidquid esset a mojoribus traditum literis,.... [Fatum et Fortuna]

27. G. Orlandi. De re aedificatoria: p. 443.

Et profecto tam varias res, tam dispres, tam dispersas, tam ab usu et cognitione scriptorum aliens colligere in unum et digno recensere modo et apto locare ordine et oratione tractare accurata et certa ratione monstrare, prosus est facultatis et eruditionis maioris, quam in me profitear. [VI, 1]

28. H. Mancini, Opera Inedita: p. 136

..ac mihi quidem cum multa apud eos auctores placerent dicta, perpauca tamen non, admodum nobis satisfacere videbantur.... [Fatum et Fortuna]

29. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. I: p. 83.

30. G. Farris, De commodis.... e Defunctus: p. 140.

31. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 244.

hic autem rectam, veramque prudentiam, et sapientiam una et acrem mentis atque ingenii vim multa cum celeritate pervestigandi, discernendi, dinoscendique suscepi. [Defunctus]

32. G. Farris, De commodis... e Defunctus: p. 212.

...; neque tuum si priscis comparem aut ingenium, aut elegantiam, aut copiam doctrine, aut dicendi vim, cuiquam ausim te postponere. Fuere namque illi veteres temporibus suis plane grati; nostra vero etate ob adeptam vetustate auctoritatem iidem longe gratissimi habentur. [Defunctus]

33. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. I: p. 340.

34. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 244.

Ma prima interponerò quello che ora qui mi torna in mente, e parmi atto a' ragionamenti passati, e ancora non alieno da questi che ora sequivano; e sarà questo ch'io referirò quasi come suco espresso da tutti e' prossimi ragionamenti passati. [De Iciarchia]

35. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 161.

36. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 161.

Adunque, e per coadornare e per variare el pavimento dagli altri affacciati del tempio, tolse que' minuti rottami rimasi da' marmi, porfidi e diaspri di tutta la struttura, e coattatogli insieme, secondo e' loro colori e quadre compose quella e quell'altra pittura, vestendone e onestandone tutto el pavimento. [Profugiorum]

37. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 161

E veggonsi queste cose litterarie usurpate da tanti, e in tanti loro scritti adoperate e disseminate, che oggi a chi voglia ragionare resta altro nulla che solo el raccogliere e assortile e poi accoppiarle insieme con qualche varietà dagli altri e adattezza dell'opera sua, quasi come suo instituto sia imitare in questo chi altrove fece el pavimento. [Profugiorum]

38. C. Grayson. Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 161 - 162.

Ma chi sarà sì fastidioso che non approvi e lodi costui, quale in sì compositissima opera pose sua industria e diligenza? E noi Agnolo, che vediamo raccolto da voi ciò che presso di tutti gli antri scrittoti era disseminato e trito, e sentiamo tante cose tante varie poste in uno e coattate e insite e ammarginate insieme, tutte corrispondere a un tuono, tutte aguagliarsi a un piano, tutte estendersi a una linea, tutte conformarsi a un disegno, non solo più nulla qui desideriamo, né solo ve ne approviamo e lodiamo, ma e molto ve ne abbiamo grazia e merito. [Profugiorum]

39. C. Grayson. Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 161.

Noi vero, dove io come colui e come quell'altro volli ornare un mio picciolo e privato diversorio tolsi da quel pubblico e nobilissimo edificio quel che me parse accommodato a' miei disegni, e divisilo in più particelle distribuendole ove a me parse. [Profugiorum]

40. E. Jeauneau, "Nani gigantum humeris insidentes': Essai d'interprétation de Bernard de Chartres," Vivarium, 5 (1967), p. 84 - 86.

41. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 161; and Martini, Momus: p. 4. Alberti's "Nihil dictum quin prius dictu," is taken from Terence' Eunuchus (v. 4). "Nullumst iam dictum quod non sit dictum prius."

42. E. Jeauneau, "Nani gigantum humeris insidentes': Essai d'interprétation de Bernard de Chartres," Vivarium, 5 (1967), p. 86.

43. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 141.

44. H. Mancini, Opera inedita: p. 141.

45. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria:p. 441.

Incidebant enim frequentes difficultates et rerum explicandarum et nominum inveniendorum et materiae pertractandae, quae me absterrerent ab incepto atque averterent; alia ex parte, quae ratio ut opus inchoarem adduxerat, eadem revocabant ut prosequerer atque hortabatur. Nanque dolebam quidem tam multa tamque praeclarissima sciptorum monumenta interisse temporum hominumque iniuria, ut vix unum ex tanto naufragio Vitruvium superstitem haberemus, scriptorem procul dubio instructissimum, sed ita affectum tempestate atque lacerum, ut multis locis multa desint et multis plurima desideres. ... Et profecto tam varias res, tam dispares, tam disparsas, tam ab usu et cognitione scriptorum aliens colligere in unum et digno recensere modo et apto locare ordine et oratione tractare accurata et certa ratione monstrate,... [VI, 1]

46. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 106.

... quandoquidem primi fuerimus qui hanc artem subtilissimam litteris mandaverimus. [III, 63]

47. C. Grayson, Opere Volgari, Vol. II: p. 161

Così avviene presso de' litterati. Gl'ingegni d'Asia e massime e' Greci, in più anni, tutti insieme furono inventori di tutte l'arte e discipline; e construssero uno quasi tempio e domicilio in suoi scritt a Pallade e a quella Pronea, dea de' filosofi stoici, ed estesero s' pareti colla investigazinoe del vero e del falso: statuitonvi le colonne col discernere e annotare

gli effeti e forze della natura, apposervi el tetto quale difendesse tanta opera dalle tempeste avverse; e questa fu la perizia di fuggire el male, e appetire e conseguire al bene, e odiare el vizio, chiedere a amare la virtù. [Profugiorum]

48. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 38 - 40.

Id quidem qua ratione fiat perscrutemur exordiamurque a philosophorum sentia,...

49. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 42.

Cuius rei qui probe rationem tenuerit minime dubitabit....

50. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 56.

Adde his quod istorum ratio admodum vitiosa esset,...

51. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 66.

Picturam in tres partes dividimus, quam quidem divisionem ab ipsa natura compertam habemus.

52. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 68.

Natura id quidem pulchre demonstrat.

53. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 70.

..., in que quidem desciptione illud a natura animadverti,....

54. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 90.

Ita natura omnes aperta et clara amamus.

55. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 96.

> Sed cupio pictorem, quo haec possit omnia pulchre tenere, in primis esse virum et bonum et doctum bonarum artium.

56. Petrarch states that it is important to understand the intention of an ancient author before quoting from him.

> Philosophers must not be judged from isolated words but from their uninterrupted coherence and consistency.... He who wants to be safe in praising the entire man must see, examine and esteem the entire man. [De ignoratia 101, 87]

Alberti, however, never asks, What did Cicero argue on this or this topic, or In opposition to Cicero, I hold this. Alberti's theory of eclecticism is however, not revolutionary. It reflects the influence of one of his early teachers at Padua, the renowned Humanist educator Gasparino Barzizza. Barzizza wrote an often neglected treatise on literary composition entitled De imitatione. In this short work Barzizza draws parallels between the writer and the activity of bees, whom he argues do not make honey themselves, but rather gather it together from the best flowers in the field. So too the writer must select the choicest passages for imitation and learn how to combine and unify them. Since the author, according to Barzizza, is allowed to make no reference to the origin of the quote, slight changes have to be introduced to avoid the appearance of plagiarism.

Barzizza's theory was very much a standard of literary practice, and was very useful in expediting the literary task. However, Alberti's thoughts have far outdistanced the pedagogical intent of Barzizza, who as a traditionalist discouraged his students from being innovative. Barzizza did not dream of competing with the ancients, as Alberti did. Barzizza's treatise is aimed at developing the proper school-boy mentality, pragmatically mixing respect with the will to acquire erudition. See G. W. Pigman, "Barzizza's Treatise on Imitation," Bibliotheque d'Humanisme et Renaissance, Vol. 44, 1982: p. 341-352.

57. G. Orlandi, De re aedificatoria:p. 441.

> Nanque dolebam quidem tam multa tamque praeclarissima sciptorum monumenta interisse temporum hominumque iniuria, ut vix unum ex tanto naufragio Vitruvium superstitem haberemus,

scriptorem procul dubio instructissimum, sed ita affectum tempestate atque lacerum, ut multis locis multa desint et multis plurima desideres. [VI, 1]

58. Alberti's version of Narcissus as presented at the beginning of Book II is invented. As Grayson notes, though Alberti claims that the story comes from the poets there is no explicit authority to support his statement. C. Grayson. On Painting...: p. 62.

59. Franco Borsi, L.B. Alberti, New York:Harper & Rowe, p. 362.

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